



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









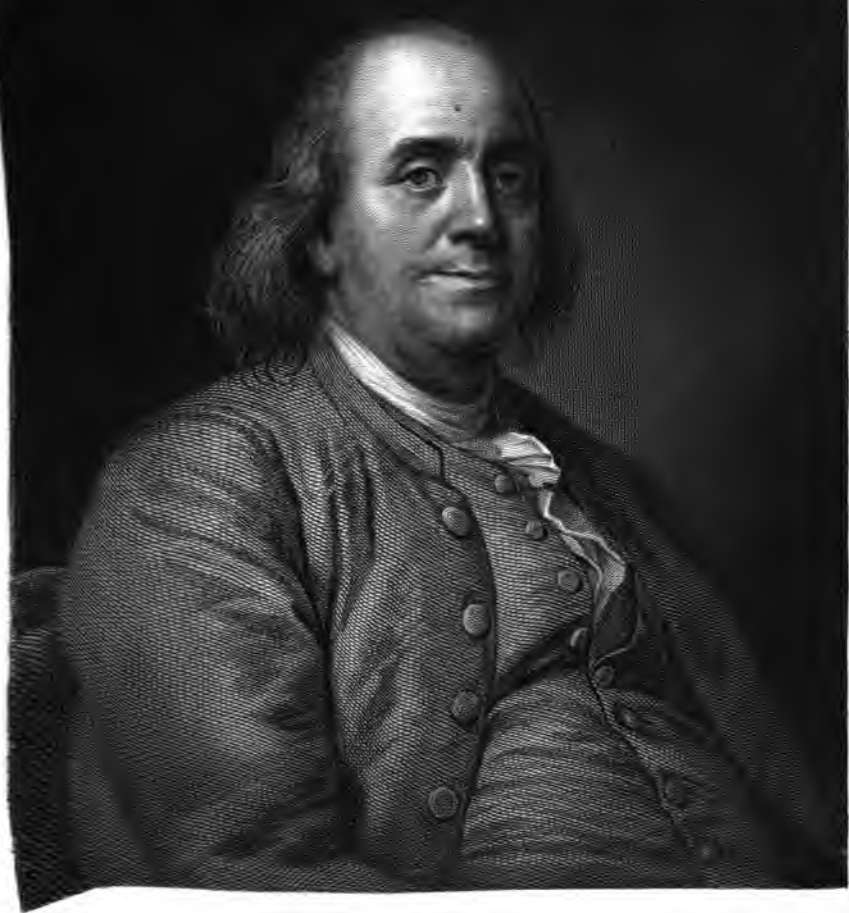
THE NEW YORK  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX  
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

AN

(Franklin, B.)  
(Franklin)

GR.2 1884



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

*Engraved by W. E. Hall, from the original picture in  
Paris, painted from life by J. M. Duplessis in 1727, and now  
(1868) in the possession of the Comte de Ségur.*

THE LIFE

# BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

WRITTEN BY THOMAS

NEW, FIRST EDITION, FOR THE FIRST TIME, IN A  
COMPLETELY NEW EDITION, BY THE  
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

BY THE REV. J. B. FRANKLIN, D.D.

THE  
LIFE

OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, D.D.  
BY THE REV. J. B. FRANKLIN, D.D.

REVISED EDITION  
J. B. FRANKLIN, D.D.  
LONDON: J. B. FRANKLIN, D.D.  
1850



THE LIFE  
OF  
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

NOW FIRST EDITED FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS  
AND FROM HIS PRINTED CORRESPONDENCE  
AND OTHER WRITINGS,

BY  
JOHN BIGELOW.

*SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.*

---

VOL. I.

---

"Plurimæ consentiunt gentes populi primarium fuisse virum."  
CICERO DE SENECTUTE (*Cato*), § 61.

PHILADELPHIA:  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.  
LONDON: 16 SOUTHAMPTON ST., STRAND.

1884.

3034

---

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1874, by  
**JOHN BIGELOW,**  
In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

---

~~~~~  
**LIPPINCOTT'S PRESS,**  
**PHILADELPHIA.**  
~~~~~

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

---

IN preparing a new edition of *The Life of Franklin, Written by Himself*, the Editor has made an effort to combine with some material additions to and improvements of the text a substantial reduction in its price. Besides a careful personal revision of its pages, he has profited faithfully by the criticisms of the press, and by the suggestions of private correspondents, in searching out and correcting every error which had escaped his attention in the first edition. The additions, though not very voluminous, will be found important.

While the Editor hopes to have added materially to the value of this work, he congratulates himself upon having been able, with the co-operation of his publishers, by a slight reduction in the size of the page, without any reduction in the size of the type, to bring within the reach of that large class of young readers who can rarely afford to buy costly books.

This biography has been fortunate enough to attract attention and to merit the favor of the British press, has heretofore maintained a strangely obstinate silence about Dr. Franklin. The terms in which the career

of our most eminent American has been recently discussed in the pages of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* and of the *London Contemporary Review* serve to mark with greater distinctness the new era in the international relations of England and the United States, when the people of both are giving more consideration to what they are than to what they have been to each other.

It is a pleasure to the writer to feel that his labors may have contributed in some degree to secure to Dr. Franklin among English men of letters a more just recognition of his many-sided greatness and usefulness.

HIGHLAND FALLS, Sept. 17, 1879.



## PREFACE.

---

THE memoirs of his own life, which Dr. Franklin began but never finished, terminated with his arrival in England, in 1757, as agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania. He was then fifty-one years of age, and just entering upon that part of his public career in which his marvellous talents appear to the greatest advantage. From this time until 1785 he resided abroad, as agent of the colonies or as minister plenipotentiary of the United States; his two brief visits to his native land, in 1762 and in 1775, scarcely constituting an interruption of his protracted foreign service.

During this long period of twenty-eight years, he was, of course, in constant correspondence, officially, with the governments he represented, and unofficially with prominent public men, and with his family and friends, both at home and abroad.

During the five years that elapsed between his final return from Europe, in 1785, and his death, he naturally maintained an active correspondence with his numerous

friends in the Old World, among whom he had spent the most useful and perhaps the happiest years of his life.

To this protracted expatriation we owe the fact that there is scarcely an important incident of Franklin's life which is not described by himself in his memoirs, or in his correspondence; and it is to this vast treasury of sterling English, which seems to have been almost miraculously preserved from incalculable perils by sea and by land, that the legion of his biographers have been indebted for whatever has most contributed to render their works attractive.

I am not aware that any other eminent man has left so complete a record of his own life. The part of it which, from the nature of things, could not be preserved in correspondence—his youth and early manhood; his years of discipline and preparation—has been made as familiar as household words to at least three generations, in those imperishable pages which, in the full maturity of his faculties and experience, he prepared at the special instance of his friends Le Veillard, Rochefoucault, and Vaughan. From the period when that fragment closes until his death, we have a continuous, I might almost say daily record of his life, his labors, his anxieties, and his triumphs, from his own pen, and written when all the incidents and emotions they awakened were most fresh and distinct in his mind.

If I may judge by the unexampled popularity and influence of his memoirs of the early part of his life, I am not mistaken in supposing that the world will be more interested in reading his own account of those more eventful years which followed, than in what any other person has said or can say about them. However we may prize the judgments of discriminating biographers of Franklin, their interest must always be subordinate to that which we feel in his own; and the pleasure, be it never so great, which we experience in reading other versions of the incidents of his varied and picturesque career only increases our curiosity to read the account which he gave of them at the time, to his government and friends, in his own pure, limpid, and sparkling English.

It is under the impulse of such convictions that the work which is now submitted to the public has been prepared. I have aimed to condense Franklin's own memorials of his entire life, hitherto scattered through many bulky volumes and yet more bulky manuscript collections, into a single compact work, and to give them the convenient order and attractiveness of a continuous narrative. To this end I have taken from his writings and correspondence whatever was autobiographical, and presented it in a strictly chronological order. I have not attempted to give all his letters, nor more of any letter or other document than furthered the central and controlling purpose of the work,—to

tell the Franklin story fully and without tediousness or vain repetitions.

Like all the modern biographers of Franklin, I have depended mainly upon the precious collection of his writings and correspondence, published by Mr. Sparks in 1836-1840. I was fortunate enough, a few years since, to obtain some valuable details of his later days, in a collection of his letters addressed to M. Le Veillard, an account of which, and of the original manuscript from which the autobiography, down to 1757, was printed,\* will be found in the history which immediately follows of the "fortunes and misfortunes" of that unique autograph.

Franklin's narrative, as I have arranged it, is at once so full and consecutive that there has been small occasion for editorial interference; but whenever an allusion is made that might not be intelligible to the general reader, or a stitch is dropped in the web of the narrative, I have endeavoured to supply what was lacking in foot-notes, leaving the Franklin text entirely unbroken—a continuous diary—up to the later stages of his last illness.

To the obvious objection that the material for this biography was already mostly in print, I answer that the like objection might be made with equal propriety

---

\* This manuscript was first printed in 1868. See "Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, edited from his Manuscript, with Notes and an Introduction, by John Bigelow." Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1868.

to quite the best biography of Franklin which has yet appeared. I refer, of course, to Mr. Parton's.

In the second place, the collection of Franklin's writings by Mr. Sparks has been many years out of print, and has become the exclusive property of the few who have the taste and the ability to own very rare and costly books.

In the third place, that work was always too voluminous and expensive for popular circulation. There probably were never more than five thousand copies printed, if so many; which were absorbed more than thirty years ago. It is quite safe to say that, of the forty millions of the present generation of Americans, not one in a thousand has ever opened a copy of the Sparks collection.

And, finally, the autobiographical portions of Franklin's writings are scattered through ten bulky volumes, to be mastered only by a perusal of the whole. It is unnecessary to say that, in these days of abundant if inferior reading, very few of those who are fortunate enough to possess these volumes have the leisure, or perhaps the inclination, to purchase a familiarity with Franklin's life at so high a price. Hence it happens that the bulk of Franklin's letters, which constitute as fine a body of English prose as was produced in the last century, is as if it had never been printed, to more than ninety per cent. of the present generation of his countrymen, not to speak of the reading world beyond

the Atlantic, where he still enjoys a fame and respect never accorded to any other American.

A nation has no possessions so valuable as its great men, living or dead; for they inspire it with noble impulses to noble achievements. When such possessions cease to be estimated by us at their proper value, or to awaken the enthusiasm of the young and the pride of the mature of a nation, we may be sure that we are yielding to a lower grade of impulses and are declining in power and influence. The cock in the fable preferred the grain of corn to the guinea, because he was a cock, and did not know that with the guinea he could have bought a year's supply of corn. When we become indifferent to the fame and the teachings of those who have headed the procession of civilizing influences in their day, we commit the folly of the cock, without the cock's excuse. It was when the trophies of Miltiades kept Themistocles from sleeping that Greece was in her glory.

I do not see, and I hope I may never see, any evidence of this kind of degeneracy in our country. It is certainly true that Franklin is relatively less read now than earlier in this century, and, as a natural consequence, the proportion of young men who order their daily life and conversation in accordance with his precepts and example, in the main singularly wise and commendable, is diminished; but that, I would fain believe, is due rather to the comparative inaccessibility

of his more practical writings than to any change of taste, or to any decline of esteem for their author.

Mr. Sparks performed a very useful work in collecting and placing beyond the possibilities of loss or destruction the great mass of Franklin's writings, but it may be doubted whether his publication has not thus far rather tended to diminish than to cultivate a popular acquaintance with them, by discouraging the publication of compendious selections adapted to the different tastes and means of the numerous varieties of readers he addressed. To assist in restoring to Franklin's writings and teachings their proper influence among us—and it was never more needed perhaps than at this moment—is the primary purpose of this unambitious work, in which I have tried to condense everything he left behind him that any one not pursuing special investigations now cares to read about the most eminent journalist, philosopher, diplomatist, and statesman\* of his time. Few who have written

---

\* Franklin's wonderful achievements in other directions seem to have blinded the public, as by an excess of light, to his merits as a statesman. Bryant, than whom it would be difficult to name a higher living authority upon any subject on which he offers an opinion, has been the first, I believe, of our public oracles fitly to recognize this additional title of Franklin to our admiration and gratitude. In a recent discourse before the printers of New York, at their celebration of the one-hundred-and-sixty-eighth anniversary of the birthday of Franklin, he said:

"The illustrious printer and journalist whose birth we this evening commemorate is often spoken of with praise as an acute observer of nature and of men, as a philosopher, as an inventor, as an able negotiator, and as a

so much, have written so little not worth reading as Franklin; and, while it might be claimed that nothing came from his pen that did not bear upon it some trace of a master's hand, I hope it will not be thought presumption in me to say that a reader may come as completely under his influence, and enter as fully into the light of his capacious understanding, by the perusal of portions of his writings as by the perusal of all.

It is but justice to myself to say, in conclusion, that these volumes are not intended to displace or to replace any other of the many biographies of Frank-

---

statesman. In this latter respect, however, he has not received all the praise which is his due. For he saw, as it seems to me, further into the true province and office of a free Government, and the duties of its legislators, than any man of his time. He saw and pointed out the folly of governing too much. He saw that it is not the business of a Government to do what can possibly be done by individuals. He saw that what the Government had to do was to restrain its citizens from invading each other's rights, and compel them to respect each other's freedom. He therefore condemned the Corn laws—the laws against the importation of grain—a hundred years before the people of Great Britain became convinced of their folly and repealed them. He held also that it was not the policy of a State to put any limitations on paper credit—in other words, he was for free banking, believing that the intermeddling of the Government with that branch of commercial business could only lead to mischief. Franklin saw also the wisdom and humanity of mitigating the calamities of war by allowing trading-vessels to pass and repass unmolested on the high seas in time of war, and before he returned from Europe in 1785 he negotiated a treaty with Prussia, which contained an article against privateering. Thus he anticipated by more than half a century the proposition which our Government since made to Great Britain."



lin with which our literature has been enriched. What any illustrious man may have said of himself should only inflame our curiosity to know what others have said of him. In giving for the first time in a consecutive story Franklin's own account of his singularly useful life, I indulge the hope of increasing rather than diminishing the curiosity of my readers to know how he impresses those who make his writings and career a subject of special investigation.

THE SQUIRRELS, February 22, 1874.



## CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	5-13
Historical Sketch of the Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Autograph MS. of Franklin's Memoirs of his Own Life . . . . .	19-76

---

### PART I.

Franklin's Outline of the Topics of his Autobiography . . . . .	77-80
Autobiography of Franklin from his Birth to his Arrival in England as Agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania (1706-1757) . . . . .	81-372

---

### PART II.

CONTINUATION OF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY FROM FRANKLIN'S ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND AS AGENT OF THE COLONY OF PENNSYLVANIA, IN JUNE, 1757, UNTIL THE CLOSE OF HIS MISSION THERE AND RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA, IN 1775.

#### CHAPTER I.

Domestication and Protracted Illness in London—Removal of Governor Denny—Countermining the Proprietors—Historical Review, etc., of Pennsylvania—Tour through England and Scotland—Cambridge University—Visits the Home of his Ancestors—Counsels the Annexation of Canada to the British Empire—Portrait of William

Penn—The "Art of Virtue"—Kames's "Elements of Criticism"— Directions for a Young Lady's Reading—Expensiveness of English Wives—Hume's "Jealousy of Commerce"—Baskerville's Printing- Types—Property of the Penn Family—Death of his Mother-in-law— Lightning Conductors (1757-1762) . . . . .	375-433
---	---------

## CHAPTER II.

His Reception in America—His Son's Marriage, and Appointment as Governor of New Jersey—Tour through the Colonies as Postmaster- General—Insurrection of the Indians—Drafts a Militia Bill—Its Re- jection by the Governor—Drafts a Petition to the Throne for a Change of Governor—Is defeated for the Assembly—Sent to England again as Agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania—Parting Advice to his Daughter (1762-1764)—Connecticut Religion . . . . .	434-448
--	---------

## CHAPTER III.

Jealousy of English Manufacturers—Origin of the Stamp Act—Opposi- tion of Franklin—Effect of its Passage in America—Names a Stamp Distributor—Unpleasant Consequences—Correspondence with Dean Tucker (1764-1766) . . . . .	449-466
--	---------

## CHAPTER IV.

Franklin's Examination before the House of Commons (1766) . . . . .	467-510
---	---------

## CHAPTER V.

Franklin sends his Wife a New Dress on the Repeal of the Stamp Act —New Disputes with the Mother Country—Colonies required to pro- vide for Soldiers—Lord Chatham—Marriage of Sally Franklin—Ex- periment of making Paper Money not a Legal Tender—Advances of the French Ambassador to Franklin—Visits the Continent—First Impressions of France and Germany (1766-1767) . . . . .	511-545
--	---------

## CHAPTER VI.

The Walpole Grant again—Change of Ministry—Hillsborough named Secretary of State for America—Franklin edits "The Farmer's Letters"—Particulars of his Election to the Royal Society—Powers of Parliament over the Colonies defined—Corruption at Elections— Dissolution of Parliament (1767-1768) . . . . .	546-570
---	---------

APPENDIX.

PAGE

No. 1. Preface to Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin, by William Temple Franklin . . . . .	573-577
No. 2. Preface to "Correspondance inédite, etc., de B. Franklin," by M. Charles Malc . . . . .	577-579



**HISTORICAL SKETCH**  
**OF THE**  
**FORTUNES AND MISFORTUNES OF THE AUTOGRAPH**  
**MANUSCRIPT**  
**OF**  
**FRANKLIN'S MEMOIRS OF HIS OWN LIFE\***

---

**I**T is well known that Franklin prepared so much of the celebrated Memoirs of his life as was originally intended for publication, mainly at the solicitation of one of his most cherished friends in France—M. le Veillard, then Mayor of Passy. Towards the close of the year 1789 he presented to this gentleman a copy of all this sketch that was then finished. At the Doctor's death,† his papers, including the original of the manuscript, passed into the hands of one of his grandsons, William Temple Franklin, who undertook to prepare an edition of the

---

\* Revised from Bigelow's Autobiography of Franklin, Lippincott, 1868.

† Benjamin Franklin died on the 17th of April, 1790, aged eighty-four years and three months.

life and writings of his grandfather for a publishing house in London.

For the greater convenience of the printer in the preparation of this edition—so goes the tradition in the Le Veillard family—William Temple Franklin exchanged the original autograph with Mrs. le Veillard, then a widow, for her copy of the Memoirs; and thus the autograph passed out of the Franklin family.

At the death of the widow le Veillard this manuscript passed to her daughter; and at her death, in 1834, it became the property of her cousin, M. de Senarmont, whose grandson, M. P. de Senarmont, transferred it to me on the 26th of January, 1867, with several other memorials of Franklin which had descended to him with the manuscript. Among the latter were the famous pastel portrait of Franklin by Duplessis which he presented to M. le Veillard; a number of letters to M. le Veillard from Dr. Franklin and from his grandsons, William Temple Franklin and Benjamin Franklin Bache; together with a minute outline of the topics of his Memoirs, brought down to the termination of his mission to France.

I availed myself of my earliest leisure to subject the Memoirs to a careful collation with the edition which appeared in London in 1817, and which was the first and only edition that ever purported to have been printed from the manuscript. The results of this collation revealed the curious fact that more than twelve hundred separate and distinct changes had been made in the text, and, what is more remarkable, that the last eight pages of the manuscript, which are second in value to no other eight pages of the work, were omitted entirely.



Many of these changes are mere modernizations of style; such as would measure some of the modifications which English prose had undergone between the days of Goldsmith and Southey. Some, Franklin might have approved of; others he might have tolerated; but it is safe to presume that very many he would have rejected without ceremony.

A few specimens taken from the first chapter will show the general character of these changes.

It is a curious fact that the very first words of the edition of 1817 are interpolations. It commences:

"To William Franklin, Governor of New Jersey.  
"Dear Son, &c."

The autograph commences with "Dear Son," naming no person.

Though William was the Doctor's only surviving son, and in 1771, when this was commenced, was also Governor of New Jersey, it is very unlikely that the Doctor would have given his son any titles in addressing him a communication of this domestic and confidential character. This improbability is increased by the circumstance that at the time this manuscript was revised and copied to be sent to his friend Le Veillard, William Franklin not only was not Governor of New Jersey, but was not living upon terms even of friendly correspondence with his father. The fact that the French version commences with "Mon cher fils," omitting the name and title, leaves no doubt that the titles were added by the editor in the edition of 1817.

(From the Edition of 1817, p. 1.)\*

Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to *learn* the circumstances of my life, many of which you are unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a *few weeks'* uninterrupted leisure, I sit down to write them. Besides, there are some other inducements *that excite me to this undertaking*. From the poverty and obscurity in which I was born, *and in which I passed my earliest years, I have raised myself* to a state of affluence and some degree of *celebrity* in the world. *As constant good fortune has accompanied me even to an advanced period of life, my posterity will perhaps be desirous of learning the means which I employed, and which, thanks to Providence, so well succeeded with me. They may also deem them fit to be imitated, should any of them find themselves in similar circumstances.*

(From the Edition of 1817, p. 4.)

My grandfather Thomas, who was born 1598, lived at Ecton till he was too old to *continue* his business, when *he retired* to Banbury in Oxfordshire to the house of his son John with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my uncle died and lies buried.

(From the Autograph, p. 1.)

Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to *know* the circumstances of my life, many of which you are *yet* unacquainted with, and expecting a *week's* uninterrupted leisure *in my present country retirement*, I sit down to write them *for you*.

*To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducing means I made use of, which, with the blessing of God, so well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated.*

(From the Autograph, p. 1.)

My grandfather Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to *follow business longer* when he *went to live with his son John, a dyer, at Banbury in Oxfordshire* with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my *grandfather* died and lies buried.

---

\* Whenever I shall have occasion to cite the edition of 1817, reference will be made to the American edition of this work, in six vols., published in Philadelphia in 1818.

(Edition of 1817, p. 4.)

My grandfather had four sons who grew up, viz.: Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. *Being at a distance from my papers*, I will give you what account I can of them from memory, and if my papers are not lost in my absence, you will find among them many more particulars.

[Omitted.]

(From the Edition of 1817, p. 10.)

I suppose you may like to know what kind of a man my father was. He had an excellent constitution, and was of a middle stature, well set, and very strong; he could draw prettily, and was a little skilled in music; *his voice was sonorous and agreeable* so that when he played on his violin and sung withal, *as he was accustomed to do after the business of the day was over*, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had some knowledge of mechanics, and on occasion was very handy with other tradesmen's tools but his great excellence was his sound understanding, etc.

(Edition of 1817, p. 15.)

About this time I met with an odd volume of the Spectator. I had never before seen any of them.

(Autograph, p. 2.)

My grandfather had four sons that grew up, viz.: Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. I will give you what account I can of them at *this distance from my papers*, and if *these are not lost in my absence*, you will, among them, find many more particulars.

(Autograph, p. 3.)

I was named after this uncle, there being a particular affection between him and my father.

(From the Autograph, p. 7.)

I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set and very strong; he was ingenious; could draw prettily, and was skilled a little in music, and had a clear, pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin, and sung withal, *as he sometimes did in an evening*, after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a *mechanical genius too*, and on occasion was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding, etc.

(Autograph, p. 13.)

About this time I met with an odd volume of the Spectator. It was the third. I had never before, etc.

(From Edition of 1817, p. 16.)

*The time I allotted for writing Exercises and for reading was at night or before work began in the morning or on Sunday, when I contrived to be in the printing house, evading as much as I could the constant attendance at public worship, which my father used to exact from me when I was under his care and which I still continued to consider as a duty, though I could not afford time to practice it.*

(Edition of 1817, p. 21.)

*He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop to take me under pretence of my being a young man of his acquaintance that had an intrigue with a girl of bad character, whose parents would compel me to marry her; and that I could neither appear or come away publicly.*

(From the Edition of 1817, p. 23.)

*On approaching the island, we found it was in a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach, so we dropped anchor and swung out our cable towards the shore. Some people came down to the shore and hallooed as we did to them, but the wind was so high and the surf so loud that we could not understand each other. There were some small boats near the shore and we made signs and called them to*

(From the Autograph, p. 14.)

*My time for these exercises and for reading was at night after work, or before it began in the morning or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing house alone, avoiding as much as I could the Common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact from me when I was under his care and which, indeed, I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practice it.*

(Autograph, p. 22.)

*He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his that had got a naughty girl with child, whose friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear, or come away publicly.*

(From the Autograph, p. 24.)

*When we drew near the island we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surf on the stony beach, so we dropped anchor and swung around toward the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hallooed to us as we did to them, but the wind was so high and the surf so loud, that we could not hear, so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs and hol-*

fetch us; but they either did not *comprehend us*, or it was impracticable, so they went off; *night approaching*, we had no remedy but to have patience till the wind abated, and in the meantime the boatman and myself concluded to sleep if we could; and so we crowded into the *hatches* where we joined the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray breaking over the head of our boat, etc.

(From the Edition of 1817, p. 29.)

I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared with astonishment.

(Edition of 1817, p. 33.)

But during my absence he had acquired a habit of *drinking of brandy*; and I found by his own account as well as that of others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved himself in a *very extravagant manner*.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Governor *received* me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a *considerable one*, and we had a good deal of conversation *relative* to books and authors.

\* \* \* \* \*

Collins wished to be employed in some counting house, but whether they discovered his *dram drinking* by his breath, or, etc.

(Edition 1817, p. 34.)

The violation of my trust respecting Vernon's money was, etc.

3

loed that they should fetch us, but they either did not *understand us* or *thought it* impracticable, so they went away, and *night coming on*, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind *should* abate; and, in the meantime, the boatman and I concluded to sleep if we could; and so crowded into the *scuttle* with the Dutchman who was still wet, and the spray *beating* over the head of our boat, etc.

(From the Autograph, p. 34.)

I was not a little surprised, and Keimer stared like a pig poisoned.

(From the Autograph, p. 39.)

But during my absence he had acquired a habit of *setting with* brandy; and I found by his own account and *what I heard from others*, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved *very oddly*.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Governor *treated* me with great civility, showed me his library, which was a *very large one*, and we had a good deal of conversation *about* books and authors.

\* \* \* \* \*

Collins wished to be employed in some counting house, but whether they discovered his *drumming* by his breath, or, etc.

(Autograph, p. 40.)

The *breaking into this money of* Vernon's, was, etc.

B

(*Edition 1817, p. 47.*)

I drank only water, the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great *drinkers* of beer.

(*Edition 1817, p. 55.*)

At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he *went* out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush and *walked* to London.

(*Autograph, p. 53.*)

I drank only water, the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great *guzzlers* of beer.

(*Autograph, p. 62.*)

At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he *walked* out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and *footed* it to London.

By whom were these changes made in the text of this manuscript?

How came the closing pages to be overlooked?

Why was the publication which purported to be made from the manuscript deferred for twenty-seven years after their author's death?

How happened it that this posthumous work which may be read in nearly every written language and is one of the half-dozen most widely popular books ever printed, should have filled the book-marts of the world for a quarter of a century without having ever been verified by the original manuscript?

I doubt if it will ever be possible to determine all these questions with absolute certainty; but I propose to lay before the reader such information as I have been able to glean from a variety of sources, both published and unpublished, leaving him to draw from them such conclusions as he thinks the testimony will warrant. The array which I shall make, if it do not settle all these questions, may lead, it is to be hoped, to the production of latent testimony that will.

## II.

Dr. Franklin informs us, in the very first paragraph of his Memoirs, that he had undertaken to prepare them for the edification of his family. The first eighty-seven pages of the MS., which embrace the first twenty-five years of his life down to his marriage, appear to have been written in 1771, during one of his visits to Twyford, the country-seat of Dr. Shipley, then Bishop of St. Asaph, and without any view to publication.\*

The MS. of this part was shown to some of his friends, among others to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, Mr. Abel James, and to M. le Veillard, who were all so pleased with it that they urged him to resume and publish them. He was persuaded to do so, and in 1784, while residing at Passy, then a suburb of Paris, wrote the succeeding pages of the MS. to page 104. The part written in England was followed with this memorandum, written, doubtless, when he revised the Memoirs in 1789:

“MEM.—Thus far was written with the intention expressed in the beginning, and therefore contains several little family anecdotes of no importance to others. What follows was written many years after, and in compliance with the advice contained in these letters,† and accord-

---

\* “Expecting,” he says, “a week’s uninterrupted leisure in my present country retirement, I sit down to write them for you.” The MS. shows that he had originally written it “for your perusal.” “Perusal” was afterward stricken out, and “use” written after it. This word was also stricken out, and the phrase left as in the text. The editor of the edition of 1817 strikes out the words “to you” also.

† The letters here referred to are from Messrs. Vaughan and James, and will be found in their proper place.

ingly intended for the public. The affairs of the Revolution occasioned the interruption."

Another reason for continuing his *Memoirs*, and giving them to the press, has been assigned by M. Castera, who published a French edition of some of Franklin's works in 1798.\* He attributes the *Autobiography* to a desire on the part of Franklin and his French friends to neutralize the pernicious influence of Rousseau's *Confessions*, which, during the latter part of Franklin's residence in Paris, were the topic of every salon. These friends thought that it would be curious to compare the history of a writer who seemed to have used his brilliant imagination merely to render himself miserable, with that of a philosopher who employed all the resources of an equally gifted intellect to assure his own happiness by contributing to the happiness of others.

---

\* *Vie de Franklin, écrite par lui-même, suivie de ses Œuvres morales, politiques et littéraires, dont la plus grande partie n'avait pas encore été publiée.*—Traduit de l'Anglais, avec des notes par J. Castera. *Eripuit Celo fulmen, Sceptrumque tyrannis.* Paris, chez F. Buisson, Imp. Lib., Rue Hautefeuille, No. 20, an vi. de la République, 1798. In his preface confounding Mr. Benjamin Franklin Bache with William Temple Franklin, who was the Doctor's literary executor and custodian of his unpublished manuscripts, Mr. Castera says: "It is not known why Mr. Benjamin Franklin Bache, who has them (the MS. memoirs) in his possession, and is now residing in London, keeps them so long from the public. The works of a great man belong less to his heirs than to the human race." It is a curious circumstance that the copy of the *Memoirs* given in this collection of Castera was translated from an English edition, which was itself only a translation from the first French translation, thus removed by three translations from the original. "A part of the life of Franklin," says Mr. Castera, "has already been translated into French and in a sufficiently careful manner. Notwithstanding, I have dared to translate it anew."



A comparison of dates will show that M. Castera's theory was purely imaginary.

\* \* \* The self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,  
The apostle of affliction, \* \* \*

wrote the first part of his Confessions during his residence in England in the years 1766 and 1767. The second was composed in Dauphiny and at Trye in the years 1768 and 1770. It was his intention that they should not be printed until 1800, presuming that by that time all who figured in them would have ceased to live; but the period he had fixed for their publication was anticipated. The first part was printed in 1781, and the second in 1788. It is not likely that Franklin or any of his friends knew anything of them till the first part was published in 1781, and all of Franklin's Memoirs that Castera published or knew anything of had been written ten years before.

The Doctor returned to the United States in the summer of 1785. In the fall of that year he received a note from his friend, Mr. Edward Bancroft, the tenor of which is sufficiently explained in the following extract from the Doctor's reply:

"PHILADELPHIA, 26th November, 1785.

"DEAR SIR:

"I received your kind letter of September 5th, informing me of the intention Mr. Dilly has of printing a new edition of my writings, and of his desire that I would furnish him with such additions as I may think proper. At present all my papers and manuscripts are so mixed with other things, by the confusions occasioned in sudden and various removals during the late troubles, that I can hardly find anything. But having nearly finished an

addition to my house, which will afford me room to put all in order, I hope soon to be able to comply with such a request; but I hope Mr. Dilly will have a good understanding in the affair with Henry & Johnson, who, having risked the former impressions, may suppose they thereby acquired some right in the copy. As to the *Life* proposed to be written, if it be by the same hand who furnished a sketch to Dr. Lettsom, which he sent me, I am afraid it will be found too full of errors for either you or me to correct; and having been persuaded by my friends, Messrs. Vaughan and M. le Veillard, Mr. James, of this place, and some others, that such a *Life* written by myself may be useful to the rising generation, I have made some progress in it, and hope to finish it this winter; so I cannot but wish that project of Mr. Dilly's biographer may be laid aside. I am nevertheless thankful to you for your friendly offer of correcting it.\* \* \* \* \*

The Doctor's hopes of completing the *Memoirs* during the winter of 1785 were not realized, nor did he resume work upon them until three years later.

"As to the little history I promised you," he writes to his friend, Le Veillard, the 15th April, 1787, "my purpose still continues of completing it, and I hoped to do it this summer, having built an addition to my house, in which I have placed my library, and where I can write without being disturbed by the noise of the children; but

---

\* The only letter we have from M. le Veillard bears date, Passy, Oct. 9, 1785. He says, in allusion to this subject: "I hope you have been industrious during your passage, and that you have finished your *Memoirs*, and will send them to me."

the General Assembly having lately desired my assistance at a great convention to be held in May next for amending the Federal Constitution, I begin to doubt whether I can make any progress in it till that business is over.”\*

In the same letter he adds farther on :

“You blame me for writing three pamphlets and neglecting to write the little history: you should consider they were written at sea, out of my own head; the other could not so well be written there for want of the documents that could only be had here.”

On the 24th of October, 1788,† the Doctor writes to M. le Veillard as follows :

“I have been much afflicted the last summer with a long-continued fit of the gout, which I am not quite clear of, though much better; my other malady is not augmented. I have lately made great progress in the work you so urgently demand, and have come as far as my fiftieth year. Being now free from public business, as my term in the Presidentship is expired, and resolving to engage in no other public employment, I expect to have it finished in about two months, if illness or some unforeseen interruption does not prevent. I do not, therefore, send a part at this time, thinking it better to retain the whole till I can view it all together, and make the proper corrections.”

William Temple Franklin also writes on the 17th of November, 1788 :

“Our new government goes on in its way. Many

---

\* See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

† See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

States have elected their Senators. The people are soon to elect their representatives. It is in March next they should meet. There is but one voice for the President-General, the illustrious Washington. In respect to the Vice President, opinions are shared between General Knox, Messrs. Hancock, Adams, &c. My grandfather having served the three years as President of this State, Genl. Mifflin has been elected in his place. My grandfather now calls himself a free man, and I believe it would be difficult to induce him to change his condition. No one could more enjoy his liberty and repose. He is now occupied in writing the continuation of his life, which you have so urgently desired of him. His health improves every day. Farewell, my friend. Recall me to the recollection of all our common friends, and say a thousand tender things to all your family. I write to your son.

“W. T. F.”\*

In three other letters to M. le Veillard, written during the year 1788, Dr. Franklin alludes to his promise and his reasons for not having hitherto been able to keep it. Under date of February 17, 1788, he writes:

“I should have proceeded in the history you mention, if I could well have avoided accepting the chair of President for this third and last year; to which I was again elected by the *unanimous* voice of the Council and General Assembly in November. If I live to see this year expire, I may enjoy some leisure, which I promise you to employ in the work you do me the honor to urge so earnestly.”†

---

\* Le Veillard Collection.

† See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

Scarcely two months later, and under date of April 22,\* he writes again :

"I received but a few days since your favor of Nov. 30, 1787, in which you continue to urge me to finish the Memoirs. My three years of service will expire in October, when a new President must be chosen, and I had the project of retiring then to my grandson's estate, in New Jersey, where I might be free from the interruption of visits, in order to complete that work for your satisfaction ; for in this city my time is so cut to pieces by friends and strangers, that I have sometimes envied the prisoners in Bastille. But considering now the little remnant of life I have left, the accidents that may happen between this and October, and your earnest desire, I have come to the resolution to proceed in that work to-morrow, and continue it daily till finished, which, if my health permits, may be in the course of the ensuing summer. As it goes on I will have a copy made for you, and you may expect to receive a part by the next packet."

About six weeks after the foregoing, and under date of June 6, he writes again :

"Eight States have now agreed to the proposed new Constitution ; there remain five who have not yet discussed it, their appointed times of meeting not having yet arrived. Two are to meet this month ; the rest later. One more agreeing, it will be carried into execution. Probably some will not agree at present, but time may bring them in ; so that we have little doubt of its becoming general, perhaps with some corrections. As to your friend's taking a share in the management of it ; his

---

\* See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

age and infirmities render him unfit for the business, as the business would be for him. After the expiration of the term of his Presidentship, which will now be in a few months, he is *determined* to engage no more in public affairs even if required; but his countrymen will be too reasonable to require it. You are not so considerate. You are a hard taskmaster. You insist on his writing his life, already a long work, and at the same time would have him continually employed in augmenting the subject, while the term shortens in which the work is to be executed."\*

The Doctor did resume the Memoirs in 1788, and probably wrote about this time all of the remainder that has hitherto been published in English. It appears, however, from the following passage in a letter to M. le Veillard, dated September 5, 1789, that he had then abandoned all hope of completing the Memoirs, and was making arrangements to transmit a copy of what was done, to M. le Veillard and to Mr. Vaughan. Whether he intended one for each or for both is not quite certain :

"I hope you have perfectly recovered of your fall at Madame Helvetius's, and that you now enjoy perfect health; as to mine, I can give you no good account. I have a long time been afflicted with almost constant and grievous pain, to combat which I have been obliged to have recourse to opium, which indeed has afforded me some ease from time to time, but then it has taken away my appetite, and so impeded my digestion that I am become totally emaciated, and little remains of me but a skeleton covered with a skin. In this situation, I have

---

\* See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

not been able to continue my Memoirs, and now I suppose I shall never finish them. Benjamin has made a copy of what is done for you, which shall be sent by the first safe opportunity.”\*

Shortly before this letter was written—on the 3d of June of that year—the Doctor wrote to his friend Vaughan, who, it appears, had been urging him to go on with the Memoirs :

“I received your kind letter of March 4th, and wish I may be able to complete what you so earnestly desire—the Memoirs of my life. But of late I am so interrupted by extreme pain, which obliges me to have recourse to opium, that, between the effects of both, I have but little time in which I can write anything. My grandson, however, is copying what is done, which will be sent to you for your opinion by the next vessel ; and not merely for your opinion, but for your advice ; for it is a difficult task to speak decently and properly of one’s own conduct ; and I feel the want of a judicious friend to encourage me in scratching out.”†

On the 2d of November he writes again to Mr. Vaughan in the same desponding strain of his health, though still more hopeful of continuing the Memoirs than he appeared when he wrote the letter last cited to M. le Veillard :

• “I thank you much for your intimations of the virtues of hemlock ; but I have tried so many things with so little effect that I am quite discouraged, and have no longer any faith in remedies for the stone. The palliating system

---

\* See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

† See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.

is what I am now fixed in. Opium gives me ease when I am attacked by pain, and by the use of it I still make life tolerable. Not being able, however, to bear sitting to write, I now make use of the hand of one of my grandsons, dictating to him from my bed. I wish, indeed, I had tried this method sooner; for so I think I might by this time have finished my Memoirs, in which I have made no progress for these six months past. I have now taken the resolution to endeavor completing them in this way of dictating to an amanuensis. What is already done I now send you, with an earnest request that you and my good friend, Dr. Price, would be so good as to take the trouble of reading it, critically examining it, and giving me your candid opinion whether I had best publish or suppress it; and if the first, then what parts had best be expunged or altered. I shall rely upon your opinions; for I am now grown so old and feeble in mind, as well as body, that I cannot place any confidence in my own judgment. In the mean time, I desire and expect that you will not suffer any copy of it, or of any part of it, to be taken for any purpose whatever.”\*

The only evidence, beyond the promise contained in his letter of the 3d of June, that the Doctor sent a copy of his Memoirs to Mr. Vaughan, is a statement made by the Duc de la Rochefoucault in an eminently discriminating and cordial eulogium which he pronounced before a society in Paris on the 13th of June, 1789; two years before the Doctor's death. In this discourse he says:

“The most voluminous of his works is the history of

---

\* See this date, *infra*, vol. iii.



his own life, which he commenced for the use of his son, and for the continuation of which we are indebted to the ardent solicitations of Monsieur le Veillard, one of his most intimate friends. It employed his leisure hours during the latter part of his life; but the bad state of his health and his excruciating pains, which gave him little respite, frequently interrupted his work; and the two copies—one of which was sent by him to London, to Dr. Price and Mr. Vaughan, and the other to Monsieur le Veillard and me—reach no farther than the year 1757. He speaks of himself as he would have done of another person, delineating his thoughts, his actions, and even his errors and faults; and he describes the unfolding of his genius and talents with the simplicity of a great man, who knows how to do justice to himself, and with the testimony of a clear conscience, void of reproach and ‘of offence toward God and toward man.’ \* \* \*

His Memoirs, gentlemen, will be published as soon as we receive from America the additions he may have made to the manuscript in our possession; and we then intend to give a complete collection of his works.”

The Duke had evidently derived his information in regard to the Memoirs exclusively from the letter last cited to M. le Veillard.

The Doctor died in a little less than six months after his letter of the 2d of November to Mr. Vaughan. By his will, made in the summer of 1788, he bequeathed his books, manuscripts, and papers, after deducting a few special bequests, to his grandson, William Temple Franklin. Among the manuscripts was the original text of these Memoirs.

On the 22d of May, Wm. Temple wrote M. le Veil-

lard, announcing his grandfather's death and the interest he had acquired in the *Memoirs*, which might be said to have owed their existence to M. le Veillard's pertinacity; his intention to prepare them for publication, and requesting M. le Veillard to show them to no one unless to the Academician who should be charged to make the eulogy of the deceased, and to permit no one to take a copy of what had been sent him. He adds that he himself has the original. This letter was written in French.

"PHILADELPHIA, 22 May, 1790.\*

"You have already learned, my dear friend, the loss which you and I, and the world, have experienced, in the death of this good and amiable papa. Although we have long expected it, we were none the less shocked by it when it arrived. He loved you very tenderly, as he did all your family, and I do not doubt you will share my just sorrow. I intended writing you the details of his death by M. de Chaumont, but the duty of arranging his affairs, and especially his papers, prevents my answering your last, as well as the one which your daughter was pleased to write me, accompanying her work. I have been touched with this mark of her condescension and friendship, and I beg you to testify to her my gratitude until I have an opportunity of writing to her, which will certainly be by the first occasion for France. Now, as I am about writing, her goodness will awaken me. This letter will reach you by way of England.

"I feel it my duty to profit by this occasion to inform you that my grandfather, among other legacies, has left all his papers and manuscripts to me, with permission to

---

\* For the original see vol. iii. p. 465.

turn them to what profit I can. Consequently, I beg you, my dear friend, to show to no one that part of his Life which he sent you some time since, lest some one copy and publish it, which would infinitely prejudice the publication which I propose to make as soon as possible, of his entire Life and of his other works. As I have the original here of the part which you have, it will not be necessary for you to send it to me, but I beg you at all events to put it in an envelope, well sealed, addressed to me, in order that by no accident it may get into other hands.

"If, however, it should be necessary to assist the person who will pronounce his eulogy at the Academy, you may lend it for that purpose, with the stipulation that no copy of it shall be made, and with such other precautions as you deem necessary. The foreign representatives of our Government have not yet been named. It is possible I may be one, which would put me in the way to assist in the publication of my grandfather's works; but even if they think no more of me, it is very probable that I shall conclude to go to Europe, inasmuch as I am persuaded I can derive more advantage from the publication in England or in France than in this country.

"Adieu for the present. In two or three weeks I hope to be able to write to you directly, as well as to my other friends, male and female, in France. Love me, my dear friend. I have more need than ever of your friendship.

"W. T. FRANKLIN."

In the course of a few months after this letter was written, William Temple Franklin arrived in London, where he pretended to be engaged in preparing an edition

of the Life and works of his grandfather, which he then expected to have ready in the course of the year. But it was ordained that this pre-eminently American work should be first presented to the world in a foreign tongue. A French translation appeared at Paris in 1791.\* It embraced only the first eighty-seven pages of the manuscript. In his preface the editor seems to question the good faith of William Temple's promise to publish the *Memoirs* entire. As this preface is not readily accessible, and as it constitutes an important link in the history of this manuscript, I need offer no apology for giving it entire :

"I shall not enter into an uninteresting detail relative to the manner in which the original manuscript of these *Memoirs*, which are written in the English language, came into my possession. They appeared to me to be so interesting that I did not hesitate a single moment to translate them into French.

"The name of Franklin will undoubtedly become a passport to a work of this nature, and the character of truth and simplicity discernible in every page must guarantee its authenticity. I have no manner of occasion to join other testimonies.

"If, however, any critic chooses to disbelieve my assertion, and is desirous to bring the existence of the original manuscript into doubt, I am ready to verify it by means of an immediate impression;† but as I am not certain

---

\* *Mémoires de la vie privée de Benjamin Franklin, écrits par lui-même et adressés à son fils, suivis d'un précis historique de sa vie politique, et de plusieurs pièces relatives à ce père de la liberté.* A Paris, chez Buisson, Libraire, Rue Hautefeuille, No. 20. 1791.

† "Those who may be desirous of reading the *Memoirs* of the public life of Franklin in the original are requested to leave their names with Buisson, bookseller, Rue Hautefeuille, No. 20. The work will be sent

of the sale of a work written in a foreign language, I cannot publish it in any other manner than by means of a subscription large enough to indemnify me for the money advanced.

“That part of the *Memoirs* of Franklin in my possession includes no more than the first period of a life, the remainder of which has become illustrious by events of the highest importance; it terminates at the epoch when, after having married, he began to render himself celebrated by plans and establishments of public utility.

“It is very possible that he may have written more of his history; for the portion of it which I now present to the public concludes, according to his own account, with the year 1771.\*

“If this be the case, the heirs of that great man will not fail some day to publish it, either in England or in Pennsylvania, and we shall doubtless have a French translation, which will be received by the public with great eagerness; but I am persuaded that his family will not disclose any other than the most brilliant period of his life—that which is connected with the memorable part he acted in the world, both as a philosopher and a statesman. They will never be prevailed upon to narrate the humble details of his early days and the simple but interesting anecdotes of his origin, the obscurity of which, although it enhances the talents and the virtues of this great man, may yet wound their own vanity.

---

to the press as soon as there are 400 subscribers. The price is 48 sols (or cents).”

\* This date is erroneous. Dr. Franklin commenced writing his *Memoirs* in 1771, but in the portion of his *Memoirs* published in 1791 he did not bring down the narrative of his life beyond the year 1757.

“If my conjecture prove right; if the Memoirs which they are about to publish under the name of Franklin should be mutilated; if the first part, so essential to readers capable of feeling and judging, should be suppressed, I shall applaud myself for having preserved it; and the world will be obliged to me for having enabled them to follow the early developments of the genius, and the first exertions of the sublime and profound mind of a man who afterward penetrated the mystery of electricity and discovered the secret measures of despotism—who preserved the universe from the ravages of thunder, and his native country from the horrors of tyranny!

“If I am accidentally mistaken, if the life of Franklin should appear entire, the public will still have the advantage of anticipating the interesting part of a history which it has long and impatiently expected.

“The principal object proposed by the American philosopher in writing these Memoirs was, to instruct posterity and amuse his own leisure hours. He has permitted his ideas to flow at the will of his memory and his heart, without ever making any effort to disguise the truth, notwithstanding it is not always very flattering to his self-love—but I here stop; it belongs to Franklin to speak for himself.

“It will be easily perceived that I have preserved as much as possible the ease and simplicity of his style in my translation. I have not even affected to correct the negligence of his language, or to clothe his sentiments with a gaudy dress, for which they have no manner of occasion; I should have been afraid of bereaving the work of one of its principal ornaments.

“As these Memoirs reach no farther than his marriage,

I have made use of other materials in order to complete so interesting a history, and I have also added a number of anecdotes and remarks relative to this philosophical American.

THE EDITOR."

Querard\* attributes this translation to a Dr. Jacques Gibelin, who, it appears, was a naturalist of some repute; had been occasionally in England; had translated from

\* Querard, *La France Littéraire*.

M. de Senarmont seems to have been under the impression that this translation was made by M. le Veillard. This M. le Veillard himself most distinctly denied in a note which he communicated to the "Journal de Paris," in 1791, No. 83, of which the following is a translation:

"PASSY, near Paris, 21st March, 1791.

"Shortly before his death, Mr. Franklin sent me the Memoirs of his life, written by himself, and I have only deferred the publication of them out of respect for his family, and especially for Wm. Temple Franklin, his grandson, to whom his grandfather has left all his manuscripts. He proposes to make a complete edition, as well in French as in English, in which he will insert my translation. He is now in England, occupied with this work, and is expected in France, in a few days, to complete it.

"Buisson, a bookseller in the Rue Hautefeuille, has published a volume in 8vo., entitled *Mémoires de la Vie Privée de Benjamin Franklin, écrits par lui-même et adressés à son fils*. The first 156 pages of this volume contain in effect the commencement of the Memoirs of Dr. Franklin, almost entirely conforming to the manuscript which I possess. I do not know by what means the translator has procured them, but I declare and think it ought to be known that he did not have them from me; that I had no part in the translation; that this fragment, which ends in 1730, is scarcely a third of what I have, which only comes down to 1757, and which consequently does not terminate this work, the remainder of which is in the hands of Mr. W. T. Franklin, who will plan his edition so that the complete Memoirs of Franklin will form one or two volumes, which may be obtained separately.

"LE VEILLARD."

English philosophical writers, Priestley among others, and had made an abridgment of the Phil. Trans. of the Royal Society, &c. How he obtained possession of the English manuscript is a mystery which will probably never be solved.\*

The following letter from William Temple Franklin in London, to M. le Veillard, was written in the spring of 1791, but subsequent to the appearance of the French translation. He represents himself as still engaged upon the Life and works of his grandfather, which he pretended would be ready for the press in a few weeks :

“LONDON, 22 April, 1791.

“I received last night, my dear friend, your letter of the 12th inst. I am as sensible as you can be of the advantage that would result from my being at present in

---

\* The relations of literary comity which must have subsisted between Gibelin and many of Franklin's English friends whose works he had translated, naturally lead to the suspicion that the copy promised Mr. Vaughan, if ever made and sent, may in some way have fallen into Gibelin's hands. If so, Mr. Vaughan must have construed the Doctor's injunction, not to permit “a copy of the MS. to be taken for any purpose whatever,” to have been removed by his death. If such was the case, however, why did he not produce an English edition?

In a notice which Cabanis prepared shortly after the news of Dr. Franklin's death reached Paris, the following allusion is made to this edition of the Memoirs :

“Benjamin Franklin s'est peint lui-même dans des Mémoires dont il n'a paru jusqu'ici qu'un fragment ; mais ce sont ses ennemis ou des pensionnaires du cabinet de Saint James qui l'ont publié. Ils y ont joint de plates notes auxquelles la famille aurait dû répondre plus tôt par la publication du reste de l'ouvrage. En attendant qu'elle remplisse ce devoir, nous allons rassembler ici quelques traits, que nous avons recueillis de la bouche même de Franklin dans une commerce intime de plusieurs années.”—*Œuvres de Cabanis*, vol. v. p. 221.



Paris, and I can assure you I am equally desirous of it. But business of the last importance, and that interested me personally, has hitherto detained me here; that, however, is now happily completed, and I am at present constantly occupied in the arrangement of my late grandfather's papers, which were left in the greatest disorder; whether I am able to complete this or not, I shall certainly leave London for Paris in the course of a fortnight. But my wish is, if possible, to finish this, and my bargain with the booksellers, before I set off, that I may not be obliged to return hither merely on that account. Were it only the *Life*, it would already have been done; but I wish a complete edition of his works to appear at the same time, and as I have no assistance, the necessary preparations are very laborious. I am very sorry that any part of the *Life* should have already appeared in France—however imperfect, which I understand it is. I have endeavored, and I hope effectually, to put a stop to a translation appearing here.

“Adieu, my dear friend; all will, I hope, go well. With my best affections to all your family, I am, as ever and for ever,

“Sincerely yours,

W. T. FRANKLIN.”\*

William Temple's apprehensions of an English translation were not without foundation.

Strange as it is that the first version of any portion of these Memoirs should have appeared in a foreign tongue, it is yet more remarkable that the first English version should have been, as it was, a translation from the French.

---

\* Le Veillard Collection.

Two years after the French version first appeared in Paris two English versions were published in London, one for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, *no date*, 8vo, the other for J. Parsons,\* No. 21 Paternoster Row, and both translations from the French. The former was the only English version printed in America until that of William Temple Franklin appeared in 1817, and continues to this day to be republished by some of the largest houses, not only in Europe, but in America, under the impression that it is both genuine and complete. What measures were taken, if any, to prevent the appearance of an English translation have not transpired.

William Temple's expectations of getting to Paris in a few weeks do not seem to have been realized; for, from the following letter it appears that nearly two months had elapsed and he was still in London, but hoped to set out for France before the end of the month. A speculation, from which he had realized £7,000, is assigned as the cause of his delay. He professes to be much distressed at what M. le Veillard had suffered—in what way is not disclosed—from his not arriving in Paris:

"LONDON, 14 *June*, 1791.

"I am much distressed, my dear friend, at what you say you suffer from my not arriving in Paris. I have been wishing to be there as much as you could wish to see me, but I could not possibly think of leaving this, while a business I had undertaken was pending for which

---

\* This edition contains the following dedication: "To Sir Henry Tempest of Tong, in the county of York, and Hope-end, in the county of Hereford, Bart., this life of Benjamin Franklin, a statesman, a philosopher and a patriot, is dedicated (as a mark of his esteem and regard) by the translator, London, July 1, 1793."

I rec'd a salary and which, being now completed, affords me a profit of *seven thousand pounds sterling*! This, my dear friend, has hitherto kept me here—having only been finally terminated on the 11th inst. I am in hopes you will think my excuse for staying till it was done a good one. I have now only some few arrangements to make in consequence of my success, and shall undoubtedly be with you before the conclusion of this month. My respects to your family and all inquiring friends, and believe me unalterably

“Yours,

“W. T. FRANKLIN.”\*

The letter which follows, dated seven months later than the preceding, authorizes the impression that William Temple Franklin had entered into engagements of some sort with M. le Veillard for bringing out his work simultaneously in France and in England. If so, his failure to keep those engagements furnishes a natural and obvious explanation of the sufferings of M. le Veillard, referred to in the preceding letter :

“LONDON, 28 Feb., 1792.

“MY DEAR FRIEND :

“I received lately your favor of the 12th inst., and previous to it, the one you mention from M. Feuillet. I am exceedingly sorry that gentleman cannot complete the translation, as I am confident it would have been well done ; however, it shall not retard the publication of such parts as are translated at the time the original appears

---

\* Le Veillard Collection.

here, which at present is not determined, but will not be delayed longer than is absolutely necessary for the arrangement of the materials. This might, perhaps, have been done sooner had I been better calculated for the business, or had not my fortune required my attention to other pursuits, by which it has been most materially benefited. Notwithstanding the opinion you entertain—that I have neglected the publication in question for business less important (which, by the way, you cannot possibly be a judge of)—I can assure you I have given it all the attention I could, consistent with the important concerns above alluded to, in which others being interested, required my first and most diligent care; and, however I may have lost something by not publishing sooner, yet it has been amply compensated by those pursuits you judge less important. I am now almost entirely employed in bringing forward the English edition, and shall not leave this till I have put it into such a train as not to require my presence; but this will take up more time than you are aware of; for however easy it may be to bring forward a *brochure*, it is no small labor to publish a voluminous work; and that, too, to be formed out of materials that were left in the greatest confusion. A few months will, I hope, satisfy your impatience and the public curiosity. When matters are in good train here, I shall immediately repair to Paris to forward the translation, and you may rely on it that at least the *Life* shall appear the *same day in Paris* as in London; sooner I see not the necessity for, and it might expose me hereafter to some difficulties here; as the French edition appearing previous to the English, a translation might be printed here to the prejudice of my *copy*.

"Adieu, my dearest friend; remember me, in the most affectionate manner, to Madame le Veillard, and every part of your family, and believe me, as ever and for ever,

"Sincerely yours,

"W. T. FRANKLIN.

"P. S.—You have heard, I suppose, of the nomination by the President of Mr. Gouverneur Morris to be minister at your Court? It has, however, suffered some demur in the Senate, and has not been yet confirmed.

"I have no doubt, however, but it will. From the well-known sentiments of Mr. M., this appointment will not, I believe, be very agreeable to the National Assembly. Mr. Short goes to Holland, and I am totally neglected. I shall therefore lose no time, but turn my attention to other pursuits."\*

No farther correspondence appears to have passed between William Temple Franklin and M. le Veillard, though the latter gentleman was living till 1794. The interruption to this correspondence was probably the result of an estrangement, of which the letters cited furnish some premonitory symptoms.

Whatever may have been the cause of the delay, William Temple's edition did not appear until 1817.

Nor, as I have before intimated, was this *editio princeps* of 1817 printed from the original manuscripts, but from the copy presented to M. le Veillard. The evi-

---

\* Le Veillard Collection.

dence of this may be found in the omission of the last eight pages, which are only to be found in the autograph, and in the following memorandum inscribed on its fly-leaves in French and in English, in the handwriting, I presume, of M. de Senarmont, or of some member of his family. The English version runs as follows :

"THE LIFE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

"WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

*"The only Manuscript Entirely of his own Handwriting.*

"Dr. Franklin, when Ambassador in France, was very intimate with M. le Veillard, *gentilhomme ordinaire du Roi*, his neighbor, near Paris. He presented his friend with a fine copy of the Memoirs of his own life.

"When William Temple Franklin, Dr. Franklin's grandson, came to Europe in order to publish the works of his illustrious grandfather, he required from M. le Veillard (M. le Veillard had perished on the Revolutionary scaffold) the correct and fine copy given by his grandfather, as more convenient for the printer. 'If I give it to you, I shall have nothing more of our friend.' 'I will give you, in place of the copy, the original manuscript of my grandfather.'

"In this manner the original and only manuscript came by inheritance into the hands of M. de Senarmont, M. le Veillard's grand-nephew."

The precise time when the exchange here referred to was made does not appear, but the following paragraph from Sir Samuel Romilly's Diary of a Visit to France in 1802, informs us that he was shown the autograph ; that

the copy originally furnished to M. le Veillard, and after ward given to William T. Franklin, was made by a copying-press, and that that copy was exchanged for the original previous to Romilly's visit in 1802 :

“Sept 7. Mad. Gautier procured for me the reading of the original manuscript of Dr. Franklin's Life. There are only two copies—this, and one which Dr. Franklin took with a machine for copying letters, and which is in possession of his grandson. Franklin gave the manuscript to M. le Veillard, of Passy, who was guillotined during the Revolution. Upon his death it came into the hands of his daughter or grand-daughter, Mad'llle le Veillard, who is the present possessor of it. It appears evidently to be the first draught written by Franklin, for in a great many places the word originally written is erased with a pen, and a word nearly synonymous substituted in its place, not over the other but further on, so as manifestly to show that the correction was made at the time of the original composition. The manuscript contains a great many additions made upon a very wide margin ; but I did not find that a single passage was anywhere struck out. Part of the work, but not quite half of it, has been translated into French, and from French retranslated into English. The Life comes down no lower than to the year 1757.” \*

The omission of the eight pages which conclude the manuscript, and which constitute one of the most precious chapters of this famous fragment, is susceptible of the following explanation :

William Temple Franklin exchanged the autograph

---

\* Life of Romilly, 3d ed., vol. i. p. 408.

manuscript for the copy sent to M. le Veillard, without being aware that, between the time that copy was made and its author's death, these pages had been added. Presuming they were the same, probably he did not compare them, and thus overlooked one of the most precious chapters of this famous fragment.

William Temple Franklin's delay in the publication of the *Memoirs*, twenty-seven years after the death of their author, cannot be so satisfactorily accounted for.

It brought a reproach upon our country for the lack of "literary enterprise and activity," of which it was thought to convict us, and was also attributed, in part, to motives not entirely honorable to the person directly responsible for the delay. The *Edinburgh Review* gave the most solemn expression to the public discontent in a review of the three-volume edition of Franklin's Works and *Memoirs*, published by Johnson & Longman, of London, in 1806.\*

In the first two paragraphs of this article the writer says:

"Nothing, we think, can show more clearly the singular want of literary enterprise or activity in the States of America than that no one has yet been found in that flourishing republic to collect and publish the works of their only philosopher. It is not even very creditable to the literary curiosity of the English public that there should have been no complete edition of the writings of Dr. Franklin till the year 1806; and we should have been altogether unable to account for the imperfect and unsatisfactory manner in which the work has now been per-

---

\* See *Edinburgh Review*, July, 1806.



formed, if it had not been for a statement in a prefatory advertisement, which removes all blame from the editor to attach it to a higher quarter. It is there stated that recently, after the death of the author, his grandson, to whom all his papers had been bequeathed, made a voyage to London for the purpose of preparing and disposing of a complete collection of all his published and unpublished writings, with Memoirs of his life brought down by himself to the year 1757, and continued to his death by his descendant. It was settled that the work should be published in three quarto volumes in England, Germany and France, and a negotiation was commenced with the booksellers as to the terms of purchase and publication. At this stage of the business, however, the proposals were suddenly withdrawn, and nothing more has been heard of the work in this its fair and natural market.

“The proprietor, it seems, had found a bidder of a different description in *some emissary of government*, whose object was to *withhold* the manuscripts from the world, not to benefit it by their publication; and they thus either passed into other hands, or the person to whom they were bequeathed received a remuneration for suppressing them.

“If this statement be correct, we have no hesitation in saying that no emissary of government was ever employed on a more miserable and unworthy service. It is ludicrous to talk of the danger of disclosing, in 1795, any secrets of State with regard to the war of American Independence; and as to any anecdotes or observations that might give offence to individuals, we think it should always be remembered that public functionaries are the property of the public; that their character belongs to

history and to posterity, and that it is equally absurd and discreditable to think of *suppressing* any part of the evidence by which their merits must be ultimately determined. But the whole of the works that have been suppressed certainly did not relate to republican politics. The history of the author's life, down to 1757, could not well contain any matter of offence, and a variety of general remarks and speculations which he is understood to have left behind him might have been permitted to see the light, though his diplomatic operations had been interdicted. The emissary of government, however, probably took no care of these things: he was resolved to leave no rubs and botches in his work, and, to stifle the dreaded revelation, he thought the best way was to strangle all the innocents in the vicinage."

William Temple's tardy vindication from these imputations is given in the preface to his edition of his grandfather's works. He there admits that he delayed their publication, that "they might not be the means of awakening painful recollections or of rekindling the dying embers of animosity."\*

Mr. Sparks thinks that William Temple Franklin had motives for delaying the publication of the writings of his grandfather which he did not assign in his preface. He says :†

"There was a rumor that the British ministry interposed, and offered the proprietor of the papers a large remuneration to suppress them, which he accepted. This rumor was so broadly stated in the preface to Johnson's edition

---

\* The whole of this preface is worth perusing. It will be found at length in Appendix I.

† Sparks' Life of Franklin, vol. vii. Preface.

as to amount to a positive charge: and it was reiterated with an assurance that would seem at least to imply that it was sustained by the public opinion. To this charge William Temple Franklin replied when, in the year 1817, he published an edition of his grandfather's works from the manuscripts in his possession. In the preface to the first volume he endeavors to explain the reason why he had so long delayed the publication, and he also takes notice of the charge in question. He treats it with indignation and contempt, and appears not to regard it as worthy of being refuted. He was less reserved in conversation. Dr. John W. Francis, of New York, saw him often in London in the year 1816, while he was preparing his grandfather's papers for the press. 'To me,' says Dr. Francis, 'he peremptorily denied all interference of any official authorities whatever with his intended publication, and assigned, as sufficient causes for the non-execution of the task committed to him, the interruption of communication and the hostilities between the French and the English nations, and the consequent embarrassments he encountered in collecting the scattered materials.' The reason here assigned for delay is not very satisfactory, and there were doubtless others. His father, William Franklin, died in 1813. He had been a pensioner on the British government, in consequence of the part he had taken in the Revolution, and it is probable that he may have been averse to the publication of his father's papers during his lifetime. To say the least, the suspicion that papers were finally suppressed for any cause is without proof and highly improbable. A paper mentioned by Mr. Jefferson, as having been shown to him by Dr. Franklin, and supposed to have been sup-

pressed, was undoubtedly the one relating to a negotiation with Lord Howe and others, for a reconciliation between the two countries, just before Dr. Franklin left England for the last time. This was published by his grandson, and is contained in the fifth volume of the present edition."

It is difficult to believe that Mr. Sparks could have read Franklin's account of his negotiations with Lord Howe by the light of Jefferson's statement to which he refers, when he wrote that "the suspicion that papers were finally suppressed for any cause is without proof and highly improbable." In the closing pages of his autobiography Mr. Jefferson tells us that he called upon Dr. Franklin in Philadelphia in 1790, and only a few weeks before his death, when the doctor placed in his hands a full account of his negotiations in London with the British ministry through Lord Howe.

"I remember," continues Mr. Jefferson, "that Lord North's answers were dry, unyielding in the spirit of unconditional submission, and betrayed an absolute indifference to the occurrence of a rupture, and he said to the mediators, at last, that 'a rebellion was not to be deprecated on the part of Great Britain; that the confiscations it would produce would provide for many of their friends.'"

"This expression was reported by the mediators to Franklin, and indicated so cool and calculated a purpose in the ministry as to render compromise hopeless, and the negotiation was discontinued.

"If this is not among the papers published, we ask what has become of it? I delivered it with my own hands into those of Temple Franklin. It certainly established views so atrocious in the British government that its suppression

would, to them, be worth a great price. But could the grandson of Dr. Franklin be, in such degree, an accomplice in the parricide of the memory of his immortal grandfather? The suspension for more than twenty years of the general publication bequeathed and confided to him, produced for a while, hard suspicions against him; and if, at last, all are not published, a part of these suspicions may remain with some.”\*

Now it is very certain that no such language or sentiment is to be found in the “account of negotiations in London for effecting a reconciliation between Great Britain and the American Colonies,” as first published by Wm. Temple Franklin, in 1817, and republished by Mr. Sparks in the 5th Vol. of his collection of the writings of Franklin.

As there can be no ground for questioning Mr. Jefferson’s testimony on this point, we are forced to the conclusion that the passage in question was suppressed. And why should we doubt it with the evidence before us, in his treatment of the autobiography, that he was not restrained from mutilating his grandfather’s works by respect either for his genius or his fame?

The theory of Mr. Sparks in regard to William Temple Franklin’s delay in publishing his grandfather’s works is, no doubt, correct so far as it goes. There can be no question with any person cognizant of the state of feeling which prevailed at the time in England toward the revolted Colonies, that the publication of an elaborate edition of Franklin’s works would have been unacceptable to the governing classes; nor can there be much doubt that such a publica-

---

\* Jefferson’s Works, Vol. I., Washington Edition.

tion would have had a tendency to compromise William Franklin with the government, and put his pension in peril. When it is further considered that William Franklin not only had no sympathy with the republican cause in America, but did all he could to betray it, and thus entitled himself to the pension upon which he lived, it may safely be inferred that he exerted what influence he possessed over his son, not only to defer the publication, but to unsettle his son's faith in the value and stability of the political fabric which their common ancestor had had such an important agency in erecting. And it is also to be borne in mind, that any representations of that nature which the father might make would have fallen upon the son's mind in a state not wholly unprepared to give it hospitality. Both he and his grandfather thought he had been treated ungraciously by our government, from which he had been educated to expect some diplomatic appointment. Immediately after his grandfather's death he left the United States under a feeling of disappointment, if not of disgust, at their ingratitude, and never returned. He bore with him in his trunk a manuscript property which could be turned to considerable account in two ways—either by printing it or by suppressing it. The course that he finally took was one which enabled him, if he chose, to take the benefit of both modes of procedure. He delayed the publication until it could no longer work any prejudice to him or his, and then found for it, doubtless, at last as propitious a market as he could have hoped for had he published earlier.

Whether he did profit by this delay, and if so, in what way and to what extent, will probably never be known with absolute certainty. Every one's conclusions will be

more or less affected by their knowledge of his character, habits and necessities. There is a paragraph in one of his letters already cited, which must henceforth be weighed in deciding this question. He wrote to M. le Veillard from London on the 14th of June, 1791 :

“I am much distressed, my dear friend, at what you say you suffer from my not arriving in Paris. I have been wishing to be there as much as you could wish to see me, but I could not possibly think of leaving this while a business I had undertaken was pending, for which I rec’d a salary ; and which, being now completed, affords me a profit of *seven thousand pounds sterling*! This, my dear friend, has hitherto kept me here—having only been finally terminated on the 11th inst. I am in hopes you will think my excuse for staying till it was done a good one. I have now only some few arrangements to make in consequence of my success, and shall undoubtedly be with you before the conclusion of this month.”

When this was written, Dr. Franklin had been dead but about a year ; the writer had been in London barely six months. He never pretended in his correspondence before to have any other business there than to edit his grandfather’s works ; he suddenly engages himself upon a salary ; in less than six months finishes his business, and pockets a profit of £7000, or say \$35,000. While earning this handsome sum he was apparently a free man, constantly writing to M. le Veillard that he was expecting to go in a few days or weeks to Paris, being only detained in London to finish his book. It is not easy to imagine any salaried employment, especially such a profitable one as this seemed to be, which imposed so slight a restraint upon the movements of its beneficiary.

From whatever source this £7000 came, and however little or much the acquisition of it had to do with the delay in the publication of his grandfather's works, it is certainly to be regretted that so little is known of the business engagement which was entered into so suddenly, was of such brief duration, and yet yielded such generous profits. Cabanis\* tells us, that when William Franklin asked of the Court of St. James the governorship of one of the colonies†—a favor by which he became unfortunately bound to the Loyalist party—Franklin said to him: "Think what this whistle will some day cost you. Why not rather be a carpenter or a ploughman, if the fortune I leave you prove insufficient? The man who works for his living is at least independent. But," added he, in telling us this story, "the young man was infatuated with the 'Excellency.' He was ashamed to resemble his father."

It is not impossible that the grandson, after residing a while in London, succumbed to a similar weakness.

In the very year that the edition of William Temple Franklin made its appearance, a collection of Franklin's correspondence was compiled and published in Paris, in 2 vols., by M. Charles Malo.‡ The Preface of this book

\* Œuvres de Cabanis, vol. v. p. 223.

† New Jersey.

‡ Correspondance inédite et secrète de Docteur B. Franklin, Ministre Plenipotentiaire des Etats-Unis d'Amérique près la Cour de France depuis l'année 1753 jusqu'en 1790, offrant, en trois parties complètes et bien distinctes,

- 1°. Les Mémoires de sa Vie privée ;
- 2°. Les causes premières de la Révolution d'Amérique ;
- 3°. L'Histoire des diverses négociations entre l'Angleterre, la France et les Etats-Unis, publiée pour la première fois en France, avec des notes, additions, &c. Paris, Janet père, Libraire Editeur, Rue Saint-Jacques, No. 59. MDCCCXVII.



was made the vehicle of a ruthless attack upon William Temple Franklin and upon his editorial enterprise, which, coming as it did from a writer of some reputation, measures the marvelous change which must have taken place in the feelings of the French people toward him since he left Paris, to have rendered such an introduction of his grandfather's works acceptable to them. M. Malo accuses him of selecting from, abridging and belittling the works of the Doctor, and concludes with the question : "Ought we to inherit from one we have assassinated ?"\*

---

\* For a translation of this diatribe, see the Appendix, No. II. The author of it, M. Charles Malo, was a voluminous writer, something of a poet, and a warm republican. The list of his works alone fills nearly two pages of Quérard. It is not strange that one who published so much should make some ludicrous blunders, of which several specimens may be found among the notes with which he endeavored to illumine the writings of Franklin. In one of his letters Franklin remarks : "They thought a Yankee was a sort of Yahoo." Upon this M. Malo remarks :

"*Yahoo*.—This must be an animal. They pretend it is an opossum ; but I have not found the word 'Yahoo' in any dictionary of natural history."

Again, in a letter to Buffon, Franklin wrote that he had escaped obesity by eating moderately, drinking neither wine nor cider, and in exercising himself daily with dumb-bells. M. Malo instructs his countrymen that "this term dumb-bell expresses among the English the motion a person seated makes in moving back and forth only the upper part of his body."

In one instance M. Malo presumed to act as a censor upon Dr. Franklin himself. In a letter of the Doctor's, he had quoted with a sort of humorous approval the following lines from an old song :

"With a courage undaunted may I face my last day,  
And when I am gone may the better sort say,  
In the morning when sober, in the evening when mellow :  
He is gone, and has not left behind him his fellow ;  
For he governed his passions."

A feeling seems to have prevailed among the French editors of Franklin's writings that he was ashamed of his grandfather's humble origin and early employments.

In the year 1807, there used to appear tri-weekly in Paris, and three columns to the page, a sort of embryo Galignani called *The Argus or London Review in Paris*. On the 28th of March of that year, under the heading of NEW YORK, 8th September, there appeared on the editorial page and in editorial type a review of Johnson's three-volume English edition of Dr. Franklin's works. The article was credited to the *American Citizen*, a journal then printed in New York, and was followed by an extract from the preface. The two pieces fill a column of the *Argus*.

The spirit of the article may be inferred from the following passage :

"William Temple Franklin, without shame, without remorse, mean and mercenary, sold the sacred deposit, committed to his care by Dr. Franklin, to the British government. Franklin's works are therefore lost to the world."

In the next succeeding number of the *Argus*, March 31st, appeared the following :

---

M. Malo remarks upon this couplet : "I have not translated the third line literally, for it did not seem to me in very good taste to desire to be praised by honest people, who are sober in the morning and drunk in the evening." So he translated the verse as follows :

"Puisse je avec courage voir arriver mon dernier jour ; et quand je ne serai plus, puissent les gens vertueux repeter souvent, 'il est mort, et n'a pas laissé son pareil au monde ! Car il avait sur ses passions un pouvoir absolu.'"

*Tuesday, 31 March, 1807.*

DR. FRANKLIN :—MR. WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN, now in Paris, has just written to us the following letter, in order to vindicate his character from the foul expressions thrown out against him, in an article inserted in the last number of the *Argus*, extracted from the *American Citizen*. We publish this letter with the greater pleasure as it contains a full and satisfactory answer to the calumnies circulated on his conduct and announces sentiments worthy of the celebrated name he bears ; at the same time that it gives the public the hope of seeing a genuine edition of the works of Dr. Franklin more conformable to the intentions and liberal principles of the author.

*To the editor of the Argus.*

PARIS, *Saturday, 28 March, 1807.*

SIR :—In the *Argus* of this day I have read with equal indignation and surprise, the unfounded and illiberal attack made on my character, as well as the numerous falsehoods contained in extracts from an American paper and in the preface of a book which appears to be lately published in London, under the specious title of “The Works of Dr. Franklin,” my worthy grandfather.

To those acquainted with me I flatter myself no justification is necessary to prove the falsehood of such unsupported assertions and insinuations, as base as they respect me, as they are ridiculous in regard to the British government. But out of respect to public opinion, to the name I bear, and to those who honor me with their friendship, I feel it incumbent on me thus publicly and solemnly to declare in answer to the libel in question :

1st. That it is false, as asserted, that I had my grand-

father's "directions to publish the entire of his works;" he left them to my discretion in this respect, as well as to the period of publication; no one has any right to interfere therewith.

2d. It is most atrociously false, as boldly and shamefully asserted without even the attempt to prove it, that I sold my grandfather's manuscripts or any part of them to the British government; or that any attempt, either direct or indirect, was made by that government or their agents to suppress the publication of the whole or any part thereof.

3d. That the said original manuscripts, with the copy prepared for the press, are now and have been long since deposited by me under lock and key in the secure vaults of my bankers, Herries, Farquhar & Co., London; they will therefore not be lost to the world as maliciously asserted from interested motives, as will appear at a future and I hope early period.

4th. That previous to my leaving London I repeatedly offered to dispose of the copyright of my grandfather's manuscripts to some of the most eminent printers there, and that on very reasonable terms—not for "*several thousand pounds*" as ridiculously set forth. They not only refused to publish, but even to undertake the printing, publishing, etc., at their sole risk, giving for reason that the period was not propitious for a publication of that nature, owing to the state of affairs in Europe, which occupied solely the public attention, so that a work of any magnitude, not immediately connected with public affairs, would not sell; and that they had lost by all their late purchases of copyright of great works, even of the most celebrated writers of modern times.

5th. That the affairs of Europe remaining in the same unsettled state, and the public mind continuing to be wholly interested therein, have alone influenced my not bringing forward a work which, to do it with propriety and becoming splendor in honor to my much revered ancestor's memory, would be attended with very considerable expense and a very uncertain success in such momentous times.\*

I have now, sir, replied to the various heads of malevolent and interested accusation brought forward against me; and I hope I have justified my character in as satisfactory a manner as it is possible against accusations and insinuations without even a shadow of proof, nay even of probability, to support them. It is easy to accuse, not always to defend. But I hope, sir, you will show your justice and impartiality by inserting this letter in your next *Argus* as an antidote to the poison contained in the former one, as far as respects the character of your humble servant,

WILLIAM TEMPLE FRANKLIN.

It is certainly a little remarkable 1st. That so large a portion of the available space of a small and obscure Paris newspaper, devoted mainly to the European affairs of those momentous times, should be given to a New York criticism of an English book; a criticism written in September, 1806, and which by March, 1807, had certainly lost much of its novelty.

2d. That William Temple Franklin, instead of presenting his defence against these foul aspersions, in one of the two countries where they had been circulated and

---

\* Sic in original.

were most damaging to his character, should have preferred an organ not one note of which was likely to reach England or America or any considerable number in France.

3d. In this letter, while stoutly denying any collusion with the British government for the suppression of his grandfather's papers, he assigns as a reason for his delay in giving them to the world, that he could not afford to publish them at his own expense, and no publisher in London would take them on other conditions. But how can the plea for delay here preferred, be reconciled with the philanthropic motive for inaction set up in his preface to the edition of his grandfather's works, which he finally published ten years later, and in which he says that to have committed them sooner to the press "would have been much more to his pecuniary advantage?"

Whatever impression this letter may have upon the mind of the reader of to-day, it is certain that it did not shake the general conviction of William Temple's contemporaries that he had yielded to influences anything but friendly to the memory of his grandfather or honorable to himself.

---

### III.

The autograph Memoirs fill 220 pages of foolscap, written both sides of the page. A margin of half its width was left on each page for such additions and corrections as the autobiographer might have occasion to make at a future day. Of this margin the Doctor took frequent advantage. He had such a clear and distinct

chirography that all the MS. is legible, though abound-  
ing with interlineations and erasures. The last eight  
pages only, betray what Cicero terms the *vacillantibus*  
*litterulis* of age and infirmity, though they also are per-  
fectly legible. They must have been written in the Doc-  
tor's eighty-fourth year, and in the intervals of those in-  
tense pains with which the latter days of his life were  
tortured.

The MS. came into my possession half bound in red  
morocco, with a memorandum, which has already been  
cited, inscribed on fly-leaves in French and in English.

As a part of the history of this manuscript, it is proper  
that I should add the following memorandum, furnished  
me in French by M. de Senarmont himself:

*“ Note on the autograph manuscript of the Memoirs of  
Benjamin Franklin.*

“ The manuscript of the Memoirs of Franklin is a folio  
of 220 pages, written with a half page margin on paper  
not of uniform size.

“ M. le Veillard, gentleman in ordinary of the king,  
and Mayor of Passy, was an intimate friend of Dr. Frank-  
lin. He had lived in daily intercourse with him at Passy,  
near Paris, during the Doctor's residence in France, at  
the epoch of the American War of Independence. At  
the departure of his friend, he accompanied him to the  
ship on which Franklin embarked for America, and it  
was from his own country that the Doctor sent him, as a  
token of his friendship, the copy of his Memoirs, subse-  
quently exchanged for the original.

“ The original manuscript is unique. Mr. William

- Temple Franklin, grandson of Benjamin Franklin, received it at the death of his grandfather, who had left him all his writings. When William Temple returned to France to prepare the edition which he published, he requested of Madame le Veillard her copy to print from because it appeared more convenient for the printer, on account of its neatness. He gave to Mad. le Veillard in exchange the original manuscript entirely written by the hand of Franklin.

“The original was, however, more complete than the copy, which Mr. Temple had not verified. Proof of this may be found in the second volume of the small edition of the *Memoirs*, in two volumes in 18mo., published by Jules Renouard, at Paris, in 1828. One may there read, at the commencement of a continuation which then appeared for the first time, a note, page 1, where the editor states that this continuation was communicated to them by the Le Veillard family.\*

“The simple inspection demonstrates the authenticity of the manuscript, in support of which may be furnished other positive proofs, drawn from the different pieces accompanying it, such as—

---

\* The note here referred to, translated, reads as follows: “We publish for the first time this piece, which had never been published in English or French. It is translated from the original manuscript which served for the English edition which William Temple Franklin published in 1818, of the *Memoirs* of his grandfather. This manuscript belongs to the family of M. le Veillard, an intimate friend of Franklin, and we owe the communication of it to M. de S., one of the members of this honorable family.”

The M. de S. here referred to, I presume, was the father of the M. P. de Senarmont from whom I received the *Memoirs* and the *memorandum* now under the reader's eye.



"The three letters of Dr. Franklin to M. le Veillard ; three letters from Mr. William Temple to the same ; and various letters from Benjamin Franklin Bache, Sarah Bache, his wife,\* and from a bookseller who wished to purchase the manuscript of M. le Veillard in 1791.†

"M. le Veillard, who is the author of the French translation of the Memoirs of Franklin,‡ has preserved the autograph manuscript, with a sentiment corresponding with that which determined his friend to send him the MS. copy.

"After the death of M. le Veillard, who perished on the Revolutionary scaffold in 1794, the MS. went to his

\* Sarah Bache was the mother, not the wife, of Benj. F. Bache.

† The bookseller here referred to is Buisson, who published the first edition of the Memoirs, in French, in 1791. His note reads as follows :

SIR :—I learn that you have manuscripts relating to the life of Dr. Franklin. If it is your intention to dispose of them, I offer to become their purchaser.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Your humble and obedient servant,

BUISSON,

Bookseller, Rue Hautefeuille, No. 2.

I want a word of reply, if you please.

PARIS, 26 *June*, 1791.

What reply was made to this application will probably never be known. That the MS. was not sold is certain, for we know it was afterward exchanged for the autograph.

On the other hand, M. le Veillard, in his note to the *Journal de Paris*, quoted above, distinctly says that he not only had nothing to do with the translation, but did not know how the translator had been able to procure the manuscript from which to make it.

‡ M. de Senarmont is evidently in error in attributing the French translation that was printed in 1791 to M. le Veillard. M. le Veillard made a translation ; but it must have been printed subsequently, if at all. See note to page 43.

daughter. At her death, in 1834, it became the property of her cousin, M. de Senarmont, whose grandson delivered it, on the 26th January, 1867, to Mr. John Bigelow, late Minister of the United States at Paris.

"The manuscript is accompanied by a beautiful portrait in pastel by Duplessis. Franklin sat for this portrait during his sojourn at Passy, and presented it himself to M. le Veillard.

" (Signed) L. DE SENARMONT.

" PARIS, 17th January, 1867."

In addition to the continuation of the Memoirs which was overlooked by William Temple Franklin, already referred to, I was so fortunate as to find in the Le Veillard collection a skeleton sketch of the topics which Dr. Franklin originally proposed to treat in the Autobiography. It was, doubtless, the first outline of the work. It is written upon a letter sheet, the first three pages in black ink and in the hand of a copyist, while the continuation of seven lines on the fourth page, beginning with "Hutchinson's Letters," are in red ink, and in the hand of Franklin himself.

A line is drawn with a pen through the middle of the first page of the manuscript down to the words: "*Library erected—manner of conducting the project—its plan and utility.*" As these are the topics which conclude the first part of the Memoirs, terminating at page 87 of the manuscript, the line was probably drawn by Franklin when he had reached that stage of his work, that he might the more easily know with what topic to resume it when he should have occasion to do so.

I give this Outline as an introduction to the Memoirs.

It will be found extremely interesting, first, as showing how systematically Franklin set about the execution of the task of which these Memoirs are the result; and, secondly, for the notions it gives us of the unexecuted portion of his plan.\*

The printed manuscript ends with his departure to England as agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania, to settle the disputes about the proprietary taxes in 1757, while the Outline comes down to the conclusion of his diplomatic career, of course embracing the most interesting portion of his life.

This volume is embellished by a portrait of Franklin, engraved from the pastel by Duplessis in the Le Veillard Collection. Franklin sat for it to Duplessis in 1783, and presented it to his friend, Le Veillard. At the bottom of the old gilt frame, in front, is the following inscription upon the frame :

"BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,

"À 77 ANS,

„Peint par J<sup>e</sup> S<sup>t</sup> Duplessis,

"1783.

"Donné par Franklin lui-même."

On the back is the following memorandum, placed there, doubtless, by M. le Veillard :

---

\* The glimpse given in this Outline of Franklin's habits of composition tempts me to refer the reader to an extract from a letter which Dr. Franklin wrote to Mr. Vaughan in 1789, in which, at Mr. Vaughan's request, he gives him some counsel on the subject of his style. What he says will help the reader to comprehend the uses for which the Outline referred to in the text was prepared. See vol. iii., p. 440.

Benjamin Franklin, à 77 ans ; peint en 1783 par Duplessis ; donné par Franklin lui-même à M. Louis le Veillard, gentilhomme ordinaire de la Reine, son ami et son voisin à Passy.

Joseph Siffred Duplessis, Académicien, né à Charpentray, s'est distingué par une belle intelligence, les effets de la lumière sur les chairs et accessoires, un pinceau large, bien senti, et un coloris vrai. Les personnages de distinction dans ses portraits sont posés avec noblesse et dans des attitudes bien choisies. Il a peint le portrait de Louis XVI., ceux de M. et Mme. Necker, et de plusieurs grands de la Cour.—Les trois siècles de la peinture la France, par Gault de St. Germain. 1808.—Swiback, l'élève le plus distingué de Duplessis, a surpassé son maître.

I do not know that I can more appropriately conclude this bibliographical summary than by quoting a few passages from the introduction to the Memoirs of Franklin by Professor Edward Laboulaye, which appeared in Paris in 1866.\* The translation of the Memoirs and correspondence of Franklin was one of the many ways by which this distinguished jurist contributed, during our late struggle for the preservation of our Federal Union, to keep alive in France that friendship for the United States which Franklin, more than any other one person, had the merit of inspiring, and to which, for the second time, we have been largely beholden for our national existence :

“What constitutes the charm of the Memoirs is not the recital of events, which are of the most ordinary character ; it is the reflections which accompany their recital.

---

\* Mémoires de Benjamin Franklin, écrits par lui-même, traduits de l'Anglais et annotés par Edouard Laboulaye, de l'Institut de France. Paris, Librairie de L. Hachette & Cie. 1866.

Franklin is a born moralist. The first letter he writes to his sister is a sermon on the virtues of a good house-keeper. The penitent is fifteen and the preacher twenty. From this moment to his death Franklin did not change. He is always the man who reasons out his conduct—the sage who, following the ingenious definition of Mr. Bancroft, never said a word too soon nor a word too late. He never said a word too much, nor failed to say the decisive word at the proper moment. In his letters how many moral lessons, given with as much gayety as power! It is not an author one reads; he is a friend to whom one listens. There is Franklin, with his venerable face, his hair floating back, and his eye always shrewd and quick, presenting altogether one of the most amiable figures of the last century. How many prejudices he playfully dissipated! how he rallied the selfishness of individuals and the artifices of governments, which are but another form of selfishness! Do not ask of him anything sublime, nor expect from him those bursts which raise you above the passing world. Franklin never quits the earth; it is not genius in him; it is good sense expressed in its highest power. Do not seek in him a poet, nor even an orator, but a master of practical life—a man to whom the world belongs. Neither imagine you have to do with a vulgar, worldly wisdom. This amiable mocker, who laughs at everything, is not the less kind-hearted, a devoted patriot, and one of the sincerest friends of humanity. His laugh is not that of Voltaire; there is no bitterness in it; it is the benevolent smile of an old man whom life has taught to be indulgent. In noting without vanity what he terms his errata of conduct, Franklin teaches us that no one has a right to judge another severely, and that in the

most correct life there is always many a page to correct. It is thus that he humbles himself to us to encourage us. He is a companion who takes us by the hand, and, talking with us familiarly, little by little, makes us blush at our weaknesses, and communicates to us something of his warmth and goodness. Such are the effects wrought by perusing the Memoirs, and still more by the correspondence—most strengthening reading for all ages and conditions. No one ever started from a lower point than the poor apprentice of Boston. No one ever raised himself higher by his own unaided forces than the inventor of the lightning-rod. No one has rendered greater service to his country than the diplomatist who signed the treaty of 1783, and assured the independence of the United States. Better than the biographies of Plutarch, this life, so long and so well filled, is a source of perpetual instruction to all men. Every one can there find counsel and example. \* \* \* Franklin has never played a part—neither with others nor with himself. He says what he thinks; he does what he says. He knows but one road which leads from destitution to fortune. He knows of but one mode to arrive at happiness, or, at least, to contentment; it is by labor, economy, and probity. Such is the receipt he gives to his readers; but this receipt he commenced by trying himself. We can believe in a secret with which he himself succeeded. In our democratic society, where every one seeks to better his condition—a very legitimate purpose—nothing is worth so much as the example and the lessons of a man who, without influence and without fortune, became master after having been a laborer—gave himself the education which he lacked, and, by force of toil, privations and

courage, raised himself to the first rank in his country, and conquered the admiration and respect of the human race. To have the talent of Franklin, or to be favored as he was by events, is not given to all; but every one may have the honor of following such a model, even without the hope of reaching it."

In submitting these memoirs to the world I am encouraged by the reflection that there never was a time in the history of our country when the lessons of humility, economy, industry, toleration, charity, and patriotism, which are made so captivating in its pages, could be studied with more profit by the rising generation of Americans than now. They have burdens to bear unknown to their ancestors, and problems of government to solve unknown to history. All the qualities, moral and intellectual, that are requisite for a successful encounter with these portentous responsibilities were singularly united in the character of Franklin, and nothing in our literature is so well calculated to reproduce them as his own deliberate record of the manner in which he laid the foundation at once of his own and of his country's greatness.

All the notes to the autobiography proper, not credited to other sources, are from the manuscript, and, of course, in Franklin's handwriting.

All the notes signed "Ed." are by the Editor.

Those signed "W. T. F." are by William Temple Franklin.

Those signed "S." or "Sparks," are from Dr. Sparks' precious Collection of the Writings of Franklin.

Those signed "B. V." are by Benjamin Vaughan.

I have rigorously followed the orthography of the MS. ; not that I attach much importance to this comparatively mechanical feature of the work, but because I thought it would be more satisfactory to most of my readers to know how Franklin wrote his autobiography than to know how it would have been written by Webster or Worcester.

JOHN BIGELOW.

THE SQUIRRELS, *February 22, 1874.*



## PART I.

[*Copie d'un Projet tres Curieux de Benjamin Franklin—1774*  
*Esquisse de ses Mémoires. Les additions à l'encre rouge*  
*sont de la main de Franklin.*]\*

My writing. Mrs. Dogood's letters. Differences arise between my Brother and me (his temper and mine); their cause in general. His Newspaper. The Prosecution he suffered. My Examination. Vote of Assembly. His manner of evading it. Whereby I became free. My attempt to get employ with other Printers. He prevents me. Our frequent pleadings before our Father. The final Breach. My Inducements to quit Boston. Manner of coming to a Resolution. My leaving him and going to New York (return to eating flesh); thence to Pennsylvania. The journey, and its events on the Bay, at Amboy. The road. Meet with Dr. Brown. His character. His great work. At Burlington. The Good Woman. On the River. My Arrival at Philadelphia. First Meal and first Sleep. Money left. Employment. Lodging. First acquaintance with my afterward Wife. With J. Ralph. With Keimer. Their characters. Osborne. Watson. The Governor takes notice of me. The Occasion and Manner. His character. Offers to set me up. My return to Boston. Voyage and accidents. Reception. My Father dislikes the proposal. I return to New York and Philadelphia. Governor Burnet. J. Collins. The Money for Vernon. The Governor's Deceit. Collins not finding employment goes to Barbados much in my

---

\* This memorandum, probably in the handwriting of M. le Veillard, immediately precedes the Outline in the MS.

Debt. Ralph and I go to England. Disappointment of Governor's Letters. Colonel French his Friend. Cornwallis's Letters. Cabbin. Denham. Hamilton. Arrival in England. Get employment. Ralph not. He is an expense to me. Adventures in England. Write a Pamphlet and print 100. Schemes. Lyons. Dr. Pemberton. My diligence, and yet poor through Ralph. My Landlady. Her character. Wygate. Wilkes. Cibber. Plays. Books I borrowed. Preachers I heard. Redmayne. At Watts's. Temperance. Ghost. Conduct and Influence among the Men. Persuaded by Mr. Denham to return with him to Philadelphia and be his clerk. Our voyage and arrival. My resolutions in Writing. My Sickness. His Death. Found D. R. married. Go to work again with Keimer. Terms. His ill usage of me. My Resentment. Saying of Decow. My Friends at Burlington. Agreement with H. Meredith to set up in Partnership. Do so. Success with the Assembly. Hamilton's Friendship. Sewell's History. Gazette. Paper money. Webb. Writing *Busy Body*. Breintnal. Godfrey. His Character. Suit against us. Offer of my Friends, Coleman and Grace. Continue the Business, and M. goes to Carolina. Pamphlet on Paper Money. Gazette from Keimer. Junto credit; its plan. Marry. Library erected. Manner of conducting the project. Its plan and utility. Children. Almanac. The use I made of it. Great industry. Constant study. Father's Remark and Advice upon Diligence. Carolina Partnership. Learn French and German. Journey to Boston after ten years. Affection of my Brother. His Death, and leaving me his Son. Art of Virtue. Occasion. City Watch amended. Post-office. Spotswood. Bradford's Behavior. Clerk of Assembly. Lose one of my Sons. Project of subordinate Juntos. Write occasionally in the papers. Success in Business. Fire companies. Engines. Go again to Boston in 1743. See Dr. Spence. Whitefield. My connection with him. His generosity to me. My returns. Church Differences. My part in them. Propose a College. Not then prosecuted. Propose and establish a Philosophical Society. War. Electricity. My first knowledge of it. Partnership with D. Hall, &c. Dispute in Assembly upon Defence. Project for it. Plain Truth. Its success. Ten thousand Men raised and disciplined. Lotteries. Battery built. New Castle. My influence in the Council. Colors, Devices, and Mottos. Ladies' Military Watch. Quakers chosen of the Common Council. Put in the commission of the peace. Logan fond of me. His Library. Appointed Postmaster-General. Chosen Assemblyman. Commissioner to treat with Indians at Carlisle and at Easton. Project and establish Academy. Pamphlet on it. Journey to Boston. At Albany. Plan of union of the colonies. Copy of it. Re-

marks upon it. It fails, and how. Journey to Boston in 1754. Disputes about it in our Assembly. My part in them. New Governor. Disputes with him. His character and sayings to me. Chosen Alderman. Project of Hospital. My share in it. Its success. Boxes. Made a Commissioner of the Treasury. My commission to defend the frontier counties. Raise Men and build Forts. Militia Law of my drawing. Made Colonel. Parade of my Officers. Offence to Proprietor. Assistance to Boston Ambassadors. Journey with Shirley, &c. Meet with Braddock. Assistance to him. To the Officers of his Army. Furnish him with Forage. His concessions to me and character of me. Success of my Electrical Experiments. Medal sent me. Present Royal Society, and Speech of President. Denny's Arrival and Courtship to me. His character. My service to the Army in the affair of Quarters. Disputes about the Proprietor's Taxes continued. Project for paving the City. I am sent to England. Negotiation there. *Canada delenda est*. My Pamphlet. Its reception and effect. Projects drawn from me concerning the Conquest. Acquaintance made and their services to me—Mrs. S. M. Small, Sir John P., Mr. Wood, Sargent Strahan, and others. Their characters. Doctorate from Edinburgh, St. Andrew's. Doctorate from Oxford. Journey to Scotland. Lord Leicester. Mr. Prat. De Grey. Jackson. State of Affairs in England. Delays. Eventful Journey into Holland and Flanders. Agency from Maryland. Son's appointment. My Return. Allowance and thanks. Journey to Boston. John Penn, Governor. My conduct toward him. The Paxton Murders. My Pamphlet. Rioters march to Philadelphia. Governor retires to my House. My conduct. Sent out to the Insurgents. Turn them back. Little thanks. Disputes revived. Resolutions against continuing under Proprietary Government. Another Pamphlet. Cool thoughts. Sent again to England with Petition. Negotiation there. Lord H. His character. Agencies from New Jersey, Georgia, Massachusetts. Journey into Germany, 1766. Civilities received there. Göttingen Observations. Ditto into France in 1767. Ditto in 1769. Entertainment there at the Academy. Introduced to the King and the Mesdames, Mad. Victoria and Mrs. Lamagnon. Duc de Chaulnes, M. Beaumont, Le Roy, D'Alibard, Nollet. See Journals. Holland. Reprint my papers and add many. Books presented to me from many authors. My Book translated into French. Lightning Kite. Various Discoveries. My manner of prosecuting that Study. King of Denmark invites me to dinner. Recollect my Father's Proverb. Stamp Act. My opposition to it. Recommendation of J. Hughes. Amendment of it. Examination in Parliament. Reputation it gave me. Caressed by Ministry.

Charles Townsend's Act. Opposition to it. Stoves and chimney-plates. Armonica. Acquaintance with Ambassadors. Russian Intimation. Writing in newspapers. Glasses from Germany. Grant of Land in Nova Scotia. Sicknesses. Letters to America returned hither. The consequences. Insurance Office. My character. Costs me nothing to be civil to inferiors; a good deal to be submissive to superiors, &c., &c. Farce of Perpetual Motion. Writing for Jersey Assembly. Hutchinson's Letters. Temple. Suit in Chancery. Abuse before the Privy Council. Lord Hillsborough's character and conduct. Lord Dartmouth. Negotiation to prevent the War. Return to America. Bishop of St. Asaph. Congress. Assembly. Committee of Safety. Chevaux-de-frise. Sent to Boston, to the Camp. To Canada, to Lord Howe. To France. Treaty, &c.

# THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

---

TWYFORD, *at the Bishop of St. Asaph's*,\* 1771.

**D**EAR SON: I have ever had pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the inquiries I made among the remains of my relations when you were with me in England, and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to† you to know the circumstances of my life, many of which you are yet unacquainted with, and expecting the enjoyment of a week's uninterrupted leisure in my present country retirement, I sit down to write them for you. To which I have besides some other inducements. Having emerged from the poverty and obscurity in which I was born and bred, to a state of affluence and some degree of reputation in the world, and having gone so far through life with a considerable share of felicity, the conducting means I made use of, which with the blessing of God so

---

\* The country-seat of Bishop Shipley, the good bishop, as Dr. Franklin used to style him.—ED.

† After the words "agreeable to" the words "some of" were interlined and afterward effaced.—ED.

well succeeded, my posterity may like to know, as they may find some of them suitable to their own situations, and therefore fit to be imitated.

That felicity, when I reflected on it, has induced me sometimes to say, that were it offered to my choice, I should have no objection to a repetition of the same life from its beginning, only asking the advantages authors have in a second edition to correct some faults of the first. So I might, besides correcting the faults, change some sinister accidents and events of it for others more favorable. But though this were denied, I should still accept the offer. Since such a repetition is not to be expected, the next thing most like living one's life over again seems to be a recollection of that life, and to make that recollection as durable as possible by putting it down in writing.

Hereby, too, I shall indulge the inclination so natural in old men, to be talking of themselves and their own past actions; and I shall indulge it without being tiresome to others, who, through respect to age, might conceive themselves obliged to give me a hearing, since this may be read or not as any one pleases. And, lastly (I may as well confess it, since my denial of it will be believed by nobody), perhaps I shall a good deal gratify my own *vanity*. Indeed, I scarce ever heard or saw the introductory words, "*Without vanity I may say,*" &c., but some vain thing immediately followed. Most people dislike vanity in others, whatever share they have of

it themselves ; but I give it fair quarter wherever I meet with it, being persuaded that it is often productive of good to the possessor, and to others that are within his sphere of action ; and therefore, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life.\*

---

\* Some twenty years before he commenced his Memoirs, Franklin threw his mantle over this not unprofitable weakness which he termed Vanity, in a letter to his friend Jared Elliott :

“ PHILADELPHIA, September 12th, 1751.

“ DEAR SIR :

\* \* \* \* \*

What you mention concerning the love of praise is indeed very true : it reigns more or less in every heart ; though we are generally hypocrites, in that respect, and pretend to disregard praise, and our nice, modest ears are offended, forsooth ! with what one of the ancients calls *the sweetest kind of music*. This hypocrisy is only a sacrifice to the pride of others, or to their envy, both which, I think, ought rather to be mortified. The same sacrifice we make when we forbear to *praise ourselves*, which naturally we are all inclined to ; and I suppose it was formerly the fashion, or Virgil, that courtly writer, would not have put a speech into the mouth of his hero, which now-a-days we should esteem so great an indecency :

‘ Sum pius Æneas \* \* \*  
\* \* \* fama super æthera notus.’

One of the Romans, I forget who, justified speaking in his own praise by saying : “ Every freeman had a right to speak what he thought of himself, as well as of others.” That this is a natural inclination appears in that all children show it, and say freely, I am a good boy ; am I not a good girl ? and the like, till they have been frequently chid, and told their trumpeter is dead, and that it is unbecoming to sound their own praise, etc. But

Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.

Being forbid to praise themselves, they learn instead of it to censure

And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all humility to acknowledge that I owe the men-

others, which is only a roundabout way of praising themselves ; for condemning the conduct of another, in any particular, amounts to as much as saying, *I* am so honest, or wise, or good, or prudent, that *I* could not do or approve of such an action. This fondness for ourselves, rather than malevolence to others, I take to be the general source of censure and backbiting ; and I wish men had not been taught to dam up natural currents, to the overflowing and damage of their neighbor's grounds. Another advantage, methinks, would arise from freely speaking our good thoughts of ourselves, viz. : if we were wrong in them, somebody or other would readily set us right ; but now, while we conceal so carefully our vain, erroneous self-opinions, we may carry them to our grave, for who would offer physic to a man that seems to be in health ? And the privilege of recounting freely our own good actions might be an inducement to the doing of them, that we might be enabled to speak of them without being subject to be justly contradicted or charged with falsehood ; whereas now, as we are not allowed to mention them, and it is an uncertainty whether others will take due notice of them or not, we are perhaps the more indifferent about them ; so that, upon the whole, I wish the out-of-fashion practice of praising ourselves would, like other old fashions, come round into fashion again. But this, *I* fear, will not be in our time. So we must even be contented with what little praise we can get from one another. And I will endeavor to make you some amends for the trouble of reading this long scrawl by telling you, that I have the sincerest esteem for you, as an ingenious young man, and a good one, which, together, make the valuable member of society. As *such*, I am with great respect and affection, dear sir,

"Your obliged, humble servant,

"B. FRANKLIN."

There is, perhaps, no more interesting or profitable standard with which to compare men than the terms in which they speak of themselves. The year that Franklin wrote the last pages of his Memoirs, Gibbon commenced his. It is curious to observe the different styles in which the diplomatist and the scholar enumerate vanity among the leading and legitimate motives in which the two most fascinating and most renowned autobiographies in any language had their origin :



tioned happiness of my past life to His kind providence, which lead me to the means I used and gave

---

"A lively desire of knowing and of recording our ancestors so generally prevails that it must depend on the influence of some common principle in the minds of men. We seem to have lived in the persons of our forefathers; it is the labor and reward of vanity to extend the term of this ideal longevity. Our imagination is always active to enlarge the narrow circle in which nature has confined us. Fifty or a hundred years may be allotted to an individual; but we step forward beyond death with such hopes as religion and philosophy will suggest; and we fill up the silent vacancy that precedes our birth by associating ourselves to the authors of our existence. Our calmer judgment will rather tend to moderate than to suppress the pride of an ancient and worthy race. The satirist may laugh, the philosopher may preach, but Reason herself will respect the prejudices and habits which have been consecrated by the experience of mankind. Few there are who can sincerely despise in others an advantage of which they are secretly ambitious to partake. The knowledge of our own family from a remote period will be always esteemed as an abstract pre-eminence, since it can never be promiscuously enjoyed; but the longest series of peasants and mechanics would not afford much gratification to the pride of their descendant. We wish to discover our ancestors, but we wish to discover them possessed of ample fortunes, adorned with honorable titles, and holding an eminent rank in the class of hereditary nobles, which has been maintained for the wisest and most beneficial purposes in almost every climate of the globe and in almost every modification of political society. Wherever the distinction of birth is allowed to form a superior order in the State, education and example should always, and will often, produce among them a dignity of sentiment and propriety of conduct, which is guarded from dishonor by their own and the public esteem. If we read of some illustrious line so ancient that it has no beginning, so worthy that it ought to have no end, we sympathize in its various fortunes; nor can we blame the generous enthusiasm, or even the harmless vanity, of those who are allied to the honors of its name. For my own part, could I draw my pedigree from a general, a statesman, or a celebrated author, I should study their lives with the diligence of filial love. In the investigation of past events, our curiosity is stimulated by the immediate or indirect reference to ourselves; but in the estimate of honor we should learn to value the gifts of nature above those of fortune; to esteem in

them success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness

---

our ancestors the qualities that best promote the interests of society; and to pronounce the descendant of a king less truly noble than the offspring of a man of genius, whose writings will instruct or delight the latest posterity. The family of Confucius is in my opinion the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the Middle Ages; but in the vast equality of the empire of China the posterity of Confucius have maintained, above two thousand two hundred years, their peaceful honors and perpetual succession. The chief of the family is still revered, by the sovereign and the people, as the lively image of the wisest of mankind. The nobility of the Spencers has been illustrated and enriched by the trophies of Marlborough; but I exhort them to consider the Faëry Queen\* as the most precious jewel of their coronet. Our immortal Fielding was of the younger branch of the Earls of Denbigh, who draw their origin from the Counts of Hapsburg, the lineal descendants of Enrico, in the seventh century, Duke of Alsace. Far different have been the fortunes of the English and German divisions of the family of Hapsburg: the former, the Knights and Sheriffs of Leicestershire, have slowly risen to the dignity of a peerage; the latter, the Emperors of Germany and Kings of Spain, have threatened the liberty of the Old, and invaded the treasures of the New World. The successors of Charles the Fifth may disdain their brethren of England; but the romance of Tom Jones, that exquisite picture of human manners, will outlive the palace of the Escorial and the imperial eagle of the house of Austria. That these sentiments are just, or at least natural, I am the more inclined to believe as I am not myself interested in the cause; for I can derive from my ancestors neither glory nor shame. Yet a sincere and simple narrative of my own life may amuse some of my leisure hours; but it will subject me, and perhaps with justice, to the imputation of vanity. I may judge, however, from the experience both of past and of the present times, that the public are always curious to know the men who have left behind them any image of their minds; the most scanty

\* Nor less praiseworthy are the ladies three,  
The honor of that noble familie,  
Of which I meanest boast myself to be.

SPENSER, *Colin Clont*, &c., v. 538.

will still be exercised toward me, in continuing that happiness, or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse,

---

accounts of such men are compiled with diligence and perused with eagerness; and the student of every class may derive a lesson, or an example, from the lives most similar to his own. My name may hereafter be placed among the thousand articles of a *Biographia Britannica*; and I must be conscious that no one is so well qualified as myself to describe the series of my thoughts and actions. The authority of my masters, of the grave Thuanus and the philosophic Hume, might be sufficient to justify my design; but it would not be difficult to produce a long list of ancients and moderns who, in various forms, have exhibited their own portraits. Such portraits are often the most interesting, and sometimes the only interesting, parts of their writings; and, if they be sincere, we seldom complain of the minuteness or prolixity of these personal memorials. The lives of the younger Pliny, of Petrarch and of Erasmus, are expressed in the epistles which they themselves have given to the world; the essays of Montaigne and Sir William Temple bring us home to the houses and bosoms of the authors. We smile without contempt at the headstrong passions of Benvenuto Cellini and the gay follies of Colley Cibber. The Confessions of St. Austin and Rousseau disclose the secrets of the human heart; the Commentaries of the learned Huet have survived his evangelical demonstration; and the Memoirs of Goldoni are more truly dramatic than his Italian comedies. The heretic and the churchman are strongly marked in the characters and fortunes of Whiston and Bishop Newton; and even the dullness of Michael de Marolles and Anthony Wood acquires some value from the faithful representation of men and manners. That I am equal or superior to some of these, the effects of modesty or affectation cannot force me to dissemble."

Hume, whose account of his own life was written in 1776, the year he died, and five years after Franklin's was begun, commences and concludes his less pretending story with a similar confession. He commences by saying:

"It is difficult for a man to speak long of himself without vanity; therefore I shall be short. It may be thought an instance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this narrative shall contain little more than the history of my writings, as, indeed, almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations. The first success of most of my writings was not such as to be an object of vanity."

which I may experience as others have done ; the complexion of my future fortune being known to Him only in whose power it is to bless to us even our afflictions.

The notes one of my uncles (who had the same kind of curiosity in collecting family anecdotes) once put into my hands, furnished me with several particulars relating to our ancestors. From these notes I learned that the family had lived in the same village, Ecton, in Northamptonshire, for three hundred years, and how much longer he knew not (perhaps from the time when the name of Franklin, that be-

---

He concludes as follows :

"I am, or rather was (for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments) ; I was, I say, a man of mild dispositions, of command of temper, of an open, social and cheerful humor, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary ; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men anywise eminent have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked by her baleful tooth ; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury. My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct ; not but that the zealots, we may well suppose, would have been glad to invent and propagate any story to my disadvantage, but they could never find any which they thought would wear the face of probability. I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself, but I hope it is not a misplaced one ; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained."—ED.

B.

fore was the name of an order of people, was assumed by them as a surname when others took surnames all over the kingdom\*), on a freehold of about thirty acres, aided by the smith's business, which had continued in the family till his time, the eldest son being always bred to that business; a custom which he and my father followed as to their eldest sons. When I searched the registers at Ecton, I found an account of their births, marriages and burials from the year 1555 only, there being no registers kept in that parish at any time preceding. By that register I perceived that I was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back. My grand-

---

\* As a proof that Franklin was anciently the common name of an order or rank in England, see Judge Fortescue's *De Laudibus Legum Anglie*, written about the year 1412, in which is the following passage, to show that good juries might easily be formed in any part of England: "Regio etiam illa, ita respersa refertaque est possessoribus terrarum et agrorum, quod in ea, villula tam parva reperiri non poterit, in qua non est miles, armiger, vel pater-familias, qualis ibidem Franleri vulgariter nuncupatur, magnis ditatus possessionibus, nec non libere tenentes et alii valecti plurimi, suis patrimoniis sufficientes ad faciendum juratam, in formâ prænotata." Moreover, the same country is so filled and replenished with landed men, that therein so small a thorpe cannot be found wherein dwelleth not a knight, an esquire, or such an householder, as is there commonly called a Franklin, enriched with great possessions; and also other freeholders and many yeomen able for their livelihoodes to make a jury in form aforementioned.—*Old Translation*.

Chaucer, too, calls his country gentleman a Franklin, and, after describing his good housekeeping, thus characterizes him:

"This worthy Franklin has a purse of silk,  
Fixed to his girdle, white as morning milk.  
Knight of the Shire, first Justice at the Assize,  
To help the poor, the doubtful to advise.  
In all employments, generous, just, he proved,  
Renowned for courtesy, by all beloved."

father Thomas, who was born in 1598, lived at Ecton till he grew too old to follow business longer, when he went to live with his son John, a dyer at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, with whom my father served an apprenticeship. There my grandfather died and lies buried. We saw his gravestone in 1758. His eldest son Thomas lived in the house at Ecton, and left it with the land to his only child, a daughter, who, with her husband, one Fisher, of Wellingborough, sold it to Mr. Isted, now lord of the manor there. My grandfather had four sons that grew up, viz. : Thomas, John, Benjamin and Josiah. I will give you what account I can of them, at this distance from my papers, and if these are not lost in my absence, you will among them find many more particulars.\*

---

\* Franklin's father has left the following account of his ancestry in a letter addressed to his son Benjamin in 1739. Benjamin was then thirty-three years of age and Deputy Postmaster General at Philadelphia.

*"From Josiah to B. Franklin :*

"LOVING SON : As to the original of our name, there is various opinions ; some say that it came from a sort of title, of which a book that you bought when heré gives a lively account. Some think we are of a French extract, which was formerly called Franks ; some of a free line, a line free from that vassalage which was common to subjects in days of old ; some from a bird of long red legs. Your uncle Benjamin made inquiry of one skilled in heraldry, who told him there is two coats of armor, one belonging to the Franklins of the North, and one to the Franklins of the West. However, our circumstances have been such as that it hath hardly been worth while to concern ourselves much about these things any farther than to tickle the fancy a little. The first that I can give account of, is my great-grandfather, as it was a custom in those days among young men too many times to goe to seek their for-

Thomas was bred a smith under his father ; but, being ingenious, and encouraged in learning (as all

---

tunes, and in his travels he went upon liking to a taylor ; but he kept such a stingy house, that he left him and travelled farther, and came to a smith's house, and coming on a fasting day, being in popish times, he did not like there the first day ; the next morning the servant was called up at five in the morning, but after a little time came a good toast and good beer, and he found good housekeeping there ; he served and learned the trade of a smith. In Queen Mary's days, either his wife, or my grandmother, by father's side, informed my father that they kept their Bible fastened under the top of a joint-stool, that they might turn up the book and read in the Bible, that when anybody came to the dore they turned up the stool for fear of the aparitor, for if it were discovered they would be in hazard of their lives. My grandfather was a smith also, and settled in Eton, in Northamptonshire, and he was imprisoned a year and a day on suspicion of his being the author of some poetry that touched the character of some great man. He had only one son and one daughter ; my grandfather's name was Thomas, my mother's name was Jane. My father was born at Ecton or Eton, Northamptonshire, on the 18th of October, 1698 ; married to Miss Jane White, niece to Coll. White, of Banbury, and died in the 84th year of his age. There was nine children of us, who were happy in our parents, who took great care by their instructions and pious example to breed us up in a religious way. My eldest brother had but one child, which was married to one Mr. Fisher, at Wallingborough, in Northamptonshire. The town was lately burnt down, and whether she was a sufferer or not I cannot tell, or whether she be living or not. Her father dyed worth fifteen hundred pounds, but what her circumstances are now I know not. She hath no child. If you by the freedom of your office, makes it more likely to convey a letter to her, it would be acceptable to me. There is also children of brother John and sister Morris, but I hear nothing from them, and they write not to me, so that I know not where to find them. I have been again to about seeing \* \* \* \*, but have mist of being informed.

"We received yours, and are glad to hear poor Jammy is recovered so well. Son John received the letter, but is so busy just now that he cannot write you an answer, but will do the best he can. Now with hearty love to, and prayer for you all, I rest your affectionate father,

"JOSIAH FRANKLIN.

"BOSTON, May 26, 1739."

W. T. F.

my brothers were) by an Esquire Palmer, then the principal gentleman in that parish, he qualified himself for the business of scrivener; became a considerable man in the county; was a chief mover of all public-spirited undertakings for the county or town of Northampton, and his own village, of which many instances were related of him; and much taken notice of and patronized by the then Lord Halifax. He died in 1702, January 6, old style, just four years to a day before I was born. The account we received of his life and character from some old people at Ecton, I remember, struck you as something extraordinary, from its similarity to what you knew of mine. "Had he died on the same day," you said, "one might have supposed a transmigration."

John was bred a dyer, I believe of woolens. Benjamin was bred a silk dyer, serving an apprenticeship at London. He was an ingenious man. I remember him well, for when I was a boy he came over to my father in Boston, and lived in the house with us some years. He lived to a great age. His grandson, Samuel Franklin, now lives in Boston. He left behind him two quarto volumes, MS., of his own poetry, consisting of little occasional pieces addressed to his friends and relations, of which the following, sent to me, is a specimen.\*

---

\* Here follow in the margin the words, in brackets, "here insert it," but the poetry is not given. Mr. Sparks informs us (*Life of Franklin*, p. 6) that these volumes had been preserved, and were in possession of



He had formed a short-hand of his own, which he taught me, but, never practising it, I have now forgot it. I was named after this uncle, there being a particular affection between him and my father.

Mrs. Emmons, of Boston, great-granddaughter of their author. The following are specimens quoted by Mr. Sparks :

" Sent to his namesake, upon a Report of his Inclination to Martial Affairs, July 7th, 1710 :

" Believe me, Ben, it is a dangerous trade,  
The sword has many marred as well as made ;  
By it do many fall, not many rise,  
Makes many poor, few rich, and fewer wise ;  
Fills towns with ruin, fields with blood ; beside  
'Tis sloth's maintainer, and the shield of pride.  
Fair cities, rich to-day in plenty flow,  
War fills with want to-morrow, and with woe.  
Ruined estates, the nurse of vice, broke limbs and scars,  
Are the effects of desolating wars."

" ACROSTIC,

" Sent to Benjamin Franklin in New England, July 15th, 1710 :

" Be to thy parents an obedient son ;  
Each day let duty constantly be done ;  
Never give way to sloth, or lust, or pride,  
If free you'd be from thousand ills beside ;  
Above all ills be sure avoid the shelf ;  
Man's danger lies in Satan, sin, and self  
In virtue, learning, wisdom, progress make ;  
Ne'er shrink at suffering for thy Saviour's sake.

" Fraud and all falsehood in thy dealings flee,  
Religious always in thy station be ;  
Adore the Maker of thy inward part,  
Now's the accepted time, give him thy heart ;  
Keep a good conscience, 'tis a constant friend ;  
Like judge and witness this thy acts attend.  
In heart with bended knee, alone, adore  
None but the Three in One for evermore."

The following piece was sent when his namesake was seven years old.

" 'Tis time for me to throw aside my pen,  
When hanging sleeves read, write, and rhyme like men.

He was very pious, a great attender of sermons of the best preachers, which he took down in his short-hand, and had with him many volumes of them. He was also much of a politician; too much, perhaps, for his station. There fell lately into my hands, in London, a collection he had made of all the principal pamphlets relating to public affairs, from 1641 to 1717; many of the volumes are wanting as appears by the numbering, but there

---

This forward spring foretells a plenteous crop;  
 For if the bud bear grain, what will the top?  
 If plenty in the verdant blade appear,  
 What may we not soon hope for in the ear?  
 When flowers are beautiful before they're blown,  
 What rarities will afterward be shown!  
 If trees good fruit un'noculated bear,  
 You may be sure 'twill afterward be rare.  
 If fruits are sweet before they're time to yellow,  
 How luscious will they be when they are mellow!  
 If first year's shoots such noble clusters send,  
 What laden boughs, Engedi-like, may we expect in the end!"

These lines are more prophetic, perhaps, than the writer imagined.

*Sparks.*

This uncle Benjamin died in Boston, in 1728, leaving one son, Samuel, the only survivor of ten children. This son had an only child, who died in 1775, leaving four daughters. There are now no male descendants of Dr. Franklin's grandfather living who bear his name. The Doctor's eldest son William left one son, William Temple Franklin, who died without issue, bearing his name. His second son, Francis Folger, died when about four years of age. His very clever daughter Sarah married Richard Bache in 1767. Their descendants are—Benjamin Franklin Bache, who married Margaret Markoe; William Hartman Bache, who married Catharine Wistar; Eliza Franklin Bache, who married John Edmund Harwood; Louis Bache, who married (1st wife) Mary Ann Swift, (2d wife) Esther Egee; Deborah Bache, who married William J. Duane; Richard Bache, who married Sophia B., a daughter of Alexander J. Dallas; Sarah Bache, who married Thomas Sargeant, together with their children.—ED.

still remain eight volumes in folio, and twenty-four in quarto and in octavo. A dealer in old books met with them, and knowing me by my sometimes buying of him, he brought them to me. It seems my uncle must have left them here when he went to America, which was above fifty years since. There are many of his notes in the margins.\*

---

\* The Doctor refers to this *trouvaille* in one of his letters to Samuel Franklin, as follows :

"LONDON, 12 July, 1771.

"LOVING COUSIN : I received your kind letter of May 17th, and rejoice to hear that you and your good family are well. My love to them. With this I send you the print you desire for Mr. Bowen. He does me honor in accepting it. Sally Franklin presents her duty to you and Mrs. Franklin. Yesterday a very odd accident happened, which I must mention to you, as it relates to your grandfather. A person that deals in old books, of whom I sometimes buy, acquainted me that he had a curious collection of pamphlets bound in eight volumes folio, and twenty-four volumes quarto and octavo, which he thought from the subjects I might like to have, and that he would sell them cheap. I desired to see them, and he brought them to me. On examining, I found that they contained all the principal pamphlets and papers on public affairs that had been printed here from the Restoration down to 1715. In one of the blank leaves at the beginning of each volume the collector had written the titles of the pieces contained in it, and the price they cost him. Also notes in the margin of many of the pieces ; and the collector, I find, from the handwriting and various other circumstances, was your grandfather, my uncle Benjamin. Wherefore, I the more readily agreed to buy them. I suppose he parted with them when he left England and came to Boston, soon after your father, which was about the year 1716 or 1717, now more than fifty years since. In whose hands they have been all this time I know not. The oddity is, that the bookseller, who could suspect nothing of any relation between me and the collector, should happen to make me the offer of them. My love to your good wife and children.

"Your affectionate cousin,

—ED.

"B. FRANKLIN."

This obscure family of ours was early in the Reformation, and continued Protestants through the reign of Queen Mary, when they were sometimes in danger of trouble on account of their zeal against popery. They had got an English Bible, and to conceal and secure it, it was fastened open with tapes under and within the cover of a joint-stool. When my great-great-grandfather read it to his family, he turned up the joint-stool upon his knees, turning over the leaves then under the tapes. One of the children stood at the door to give notice if he saw the apparitor coming, who was an officer of the spiritual court. In that case the stool was turned down again upon its feet, when the Bible remained concealed under it as before. This anecdote I had from my uncle Benjamin. The family continued all of the Church of England till about the end of Charles the Second's reign, when some of the ministers that had been outed for non-conformity holding conventicles in Northamptonshire, Benjamin and Josiah adhered to them, and so continued all their lives: the rest of the family remained with the Episcopal Church.

Josiah, my father, married young, and carried his wife with three children into New England, about 1682. The conventicles having been forbidden by law, and frequently disturbed, induced some considerable men of his acquaintance to remove to that country, and he was prevailed with to accompany them thither, where they expected to enjoy their

mode of religion with freedom. By the same wife he had four children more born there, and by a second wife ten more, in all seventeen; of which I remember thirteen sitting at one time at his table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married; I was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two, and was born in Boston, New England.\* My mother, the second wife, was Abiah Folger, daughter of Peter Folger, one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honorable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*, as “*a godly, learned Englishman*,” if I remember the words rightly. I have heard that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun verse of that time and people, and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favor of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution,

---

\* He was born January 6th, 1706, old style, being Sunday, and the same as January 17th, new style, which his biographers have usually mentioned as the day of his birth. By the records of the Old South Church in Boston, to which his father and mother belonged, it appears that he was baptized the same day. In the old public Register of Births, still preserved in the Mayor's Office in Boston, his birth is recorded under the date of January 6th, 1706. At this time his father occupied a house in Milk street, opposite to the Old South Church, but he removed shortly afterward to a house at the corner of Hanover and Union streets, where it is believed he resided the remainder of his life, and where the son passed his early years.—S.

ascribing the Indian wars, and other distresses that had befallen the country, to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offense, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza ; but the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from goodwill, and, therefore he would be known to be the author.

“Because to be a libeller (says he)  
I hate it with my heart ;  
From Sherburne\* town, where now I dwell  
My name I do put here ;  
Without offense your real friend,  
It is Peter Folgier.”†

---

\* The poem, if such it may be called, of which these are the closing lines, extends through fourteen pages of a duodecimo pamphlet, entitled “A Looking-Glass for the Times ; or the former spirit of New England revived in this generation, by Peter Folger.” It is dated at the end, “April 23d, 1676.” The lines, which immediately precede those quoted by Dr. Franklin, and which are necessary to complete the sentiment intended to be conveyed by the author, are the following :

“I am for peace and not for war,  
And that's the reason why  
I write more plain than some men do,  
That use to daub and lie.  
But I shall cease, and set my name  
To what I here insert,  
Because to be a libeler  
I hate it with my heart.”

† The author's muse speaks even in the title-page, and explains to the reader his design in writing the “Looking-Glass for the Times :”

“Let all that read these verses know,  
That I intend something to show

My elder brothers were all put apprentices to different trades. I was put to the grammar-school at eight years of age, my father intending to devote me, as the tithe of his sons, to the service of the Church. My early readiness in learning to read (which must have been very early, as I do not remember when I could not read), and the opinion of all his friends, that I should certainly make a good scholar, encouraged him in this purpose of his. My uncle Benjamin, too, approved of it, and proposed to give me all his short-hand volumes of sermons, I suppose as a stock to set up with, if I would learn his character. I continued, however, at the grammar-school not quite one year, though in that time I had risen gradually from the middle of the class of that year to be the head of it, and farther was removed into the next class above it, in order to go with that into the third at the end of the year. But my father, in the mean time, from a view of the expense of a college education, which having so large a family he could not well afford, and the mean living many so educated were afterwards able to obtain—reasons that he gave to his friends in my hearing—altered his first intention, took me from the grammar-school, and sent me to a school for writing and arithmetic,

---

About our war, how it hath been,  
And also what is the chief sin,  
That God doth so with us contend,  
And when these wars are like to end,  
Read then in love; do not despise  
What here is set before thine eyes."—S.

kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell, very successful in his profession generally, and that by mild, encouraging methods. Under him I acquired fair writing pretty soon, but I failed in the arithmetic, and made no progress in it. At ten years old I was taken home to assist my father in his business, which was that of a tallow-chandler and sope-boiler; a business he was not bred to, but had assumed on his arrival in New England, and on finding his dying trade would not maintain his family, being in little request. Accordingly, I was employed in cutting wick for the candles, filling the dipping mold and the molds for cast candles, attending the shop, going of errands, etc.

I disliked the trade, and had a strong inclination for the sea, but my father declared against it; however, living near the water, I was much in and about it, learnt early to swim well, and to manage boats; and when in a boat or canoe with other boys, I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, tho' not then justly conducted.

There was a salt-marsh that bounded part of the mill-pond, on the edge of which, at high water, we used to stand to fish for minnows. By much trampling, we had made it a mere quagmire. My proposal was to build a wharff there fit for us to stand



upon, and I showed my comrades a large heap of stones, which were intended for a new house near the marsh, and which would very well suit our purpose. Accordingly, in the evening, when the workmen were gone, I assembled a number of my play-fellows, and working with them diligently like so many emmets, sometimes two or three to a stone, we brought them all away and built our little wharff. The next morning the workmen were surprised at missing the stones, which were found in our wharff. Inquiry was made after the removers; we were discovered and complained of; several of us were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest.

I think you may like to know something of his person and character. He had an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong; he was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesmen's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and publick affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate

and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade ; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice : he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbor to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life ; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavor, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was bro't up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in travelling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

My mother had likewise an excellent constitution :

she suckled all her ten children. I never knew either my father or mother to have any sickness but that of which they dy'd, he at 89, and she at 85 years of age. They lie buried together at Boston, where I some years since placed a marble over their grave, with this inscription :

JOSIAH FRANKLIN,  
and  
ABIAH his wife,  
lie here interred.  
They lived lovingly together in wedlock  
fifty-five years.  
Without an estate, or any gainful employment,  
By constant labor and industry,  
with God's blessing,  
They maintained a large family  
comfortably,  
and brought up thirteen children  
and seven grandchildren  
reputably.  
From this instance, reader,  
Be encouraged to diligence in thy calling,  
And distrust not Providence.  
• He was a pious and prudent man ;  
She, a discreet and virtuous woman.  
Their youngest son,  
In filial regard to their memory,  
Places this stone.  
J. F. born 1655, died 1744, Ætat 89.  
A. F. born 1667, died 1752, — 85.\*

---

\* The marble stone on which this inscription was engraved having become decayed, and the inscription itself defaced by time, a more durable monument has been erected over the graves of the father and mother of Franklin. The suggestion was first made at a meeting of the Building Committee of the Bunker Hill Monument Association in the autumn of 1826, and it met with universal approbation. A committee of managers was organized, and an amount of money adequate

By my rambling digressions I perceive myself to be grown old. I us'd to write more methodically. But one does not dress for private company as for a publick ball. 'Tis perhaps only negligence.

To return: I continued thus employed in my

to the object was soon contributed by the voluntary subscriptions of a large number of the citizens of Boston. The corner-stone was laid on the 15th of June, 1827, and an address appropriate to the occasion was pronounced by General Henry A. S. Dearborn. The monument is an obelisk of granite, twenty-one feet high, which rests on a square base measuring seven feet on each side and two feet in height. The obelisk is composed of five massive blocks of granite, placed one above another. On one side is the name of Franklin in large bronze letters, and a little below is a tablet of bronze, thirty-two inches long and sixteen wide, sunk into the stone. On this tablet is engraven Dr. Franklin's original inscription, as quoted in the text, and beneath it are the following lines:

THE MARBLE TABLET,  
 Bearing the above inscription,  
 Having been dilapidated by the ravages of time,  
 A number of citizens,  
 Entertaining the most profound veneration  
 For the memory of the illustrious  
 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,  
 And desirous of reminding succeeding generations  
 That he was born in Boston,  
 A. D. MDCCVI,  
 Erected this  
 Obelisk  
 Over the grave of his parents,  
 MDCCCXXVII.

A silver plate was deposited under the corner-stone, with an inscription commemorative of the occasion, a part of which is as follows: "This monument was erected over the remains of the parents of Benjamin Franklin by the citizens of Boston, from respect to the private character and public services of this illustrious patriot and philosopher, and for the many tokens of his affectionate attachment to his native town."—S.

father's business for two years, that is, till I was twelve years old; and my brother John, who was bred to that business, having left my father, married, and set up for himself at Rhode Island, there was all appearance that I was destined to supply his place, and become a tallow-chandler. But my dislike to the trade continuing, my father was under apprehensions that if he did not find one for me more agreeable, I should break away and get to sea, as his son Josiah had done, to his great vexation. He therefore sometimes took me to walk with him, and see joiners, bricklayers, turners, braziers, etc., at their work, that he might observe my inclination, and endeavor to fix it on some trade or other on land. It has ever since been a pleasure to me to see good workmen handle their tools; and it has been useful to me, having learnt so much by it as to be able to do little jobs myself in my house when a workman could not readily be got, and to construct little machines for my experiments, while the intention of making the experiment was fresh and warm in my mind. My father at last fixed upon the cutler's trade, and my uncle Benjamin's son Samuel, who was bred to that business in London, being about that time established in Boston, I was sent to be with him some time on liking. But his expectations of a fee with me displeasing my father, I was taken home again.

From a child I was fond of reading, and all the little money that came into my hands was ever laid

out in books. Pleased with the *Pilgrim's Progress*, my first collection was of John Bunyan's works in separate little volumes. I afterward sold them to enable me to buy R. Burton's *Historical Collections*; they were small chapmen's books, and cheap, 40 or 50 in all. My father's little library consisted chiefly of books in polemic divinity, most of which I read, and have since often regretted that, at a time when I had such a thirst for knowledge, more proper books had not fallen in my way, since it was now resolved I should not be a clergyman. Plutarch's *Lives* there was in which I read abundantly, and I still think that time spent to great advantage. There was also a book of De Foe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *Essays to do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life.

This bookish inclination at length determined my father to make me a printer, though he had already one son (James) of that profession. In 1717 my brother James returned from England with a press and letters to set up his business in Boston. I liked it much better than that of my father, but still had a hankering for the sea. To prevent the apprehended effect of such an inclination, my father was impatient to have me bound to my brother. I stood out some time, but at last was persuaded, and signed the indentures when I was yet but twelve years old. I was to serve as an apprentice till I was twenty-one

years of age, only I was to be allowed journeyman's wages during the last year. In a little time I made great proficiency in the business, and became a useful hand to my brother. I now had access to better books. An acquaintance with the apprentices of booksellers enabled me sometimes to borrow a small one, which I was careful to return soon and clean. Often I sat up in my room reading the greatest part of the night, when the book was borrowed in the evening and to be returned early in the morning, lest it should be missed or wanted.

And after some time an ingenious tradesman, Mr. Matthew Adams, who had a pretty collection of books, and who frequented our printing-house, took notice of me, invited me to his library, and very kindly lent me such books as I chose to read. I now took a fancy to poetry, and made some little pieces; my brother, thinking it might turn to account, encouraged me, and put me on composing occasional ballads. One was called *The Lighthouse Tragedy*, and contained an account of the drowning of Captain Worthilake, with his two daughters: the other was a sailor's song, on the taking of *Teach* (or Blackbeard) the pirate. They were wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style; and when they were printed he sent me about the town to sell them. The first sold wonderfully, the event being recent, having made a great noise. This flattered my vanity; but my father discouraged me by ridiculing my performances, and telling

me verse-makers were generally beggars. So I escaped being a poet, most probably a very bad one; but as prose writing has been of great use to me in the course of my life, and was a principal means of my advancement, I shall tell you how, in such a situation, I acquired what little ability I have in that way.

There was another bookish lad in the town, John Collins by name, with whom I was intimately acquainted. We sometimes disputed, and very fond we were of argument, and very desirous of confuting one another, which disputatious turn, by the way, is apt to become a very bad habit, making people often extremely disagreeable in company by the contradiction that is necessary to bring it into practice; and thence, besides souring and spoiling the conversation, is productive of disgusts and, perhaps enmities where you may have occasion for friendship. I had caught it by reading my father's books of dispute about religion. Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough.

A question was once, somehow or other, started between Collins and me, of the propriety of educating the female sex in learning, and their abilities for study. He was of opinion that it was improper, and that they were naturally unequal to it. I took the contrary side, perhaps a little for dispute's sake. He was naturally more eloquent, had a ready plenty



of words; and sometimes, as I thought, bore me down more by his fluency than by the strength of his reasons. As we parted without settling the point, and were not to see one another again for some time, I sat down to put my arguments in writing, which I copied fair and sent to him. He answered, and I replied. Three or four letters of a side had passed, when my father happened to find my papers and read them. Without entering into the discussion, he took occasion to talk to me about the manner of my writing; observed that, though I had the advantage of my antagonist in correct spelling and pointing (which I ow'd to the printing-house), I fell far short in elegance of expression, in method and in perspicuity, of which he convinced me by several instances. I saw the justice of his remarks, and thence grew more attentive to the manner in writing, and determined to endeavor at improvement.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and, making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in

any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collections of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and compleat the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extremely ambitious. My time for these exercises and for reading was at night, after work or before it began in the morning,

or on Sundays, when I contrived to be in the printing-house alone, evading as much as I could the common attendance on public worship which my father used to exact of me when I was under his care, and which indeed I still thought a duty, though I could not, as it seemed to me, afford time to practise it.

When about 16 years of age I happened to meet with a book, written by one Tryon, recommending a vegetable diet. I determined to go into it. My brother, being yet unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. My refusing to eat flesh occasioned an inconveniency, and I was frequently chid for my singularity. I made myself acquainted with Tryon's manner of preparing some of his dishes, such as boiling potatoes or rice, making hasty pudding, and a few others, and then proposed to my brother, that if he would give me, weekly, half the money he paid for my board, I would board myself. He instantly agreed to it, and I presently found that I could save half what he paid me. This was an additional fund for buying books. But I had another advantage in it. My brother and the rest going from the printing-house to their meals, I remained there alone, and, despatching presently my light repast, which often was no more than a bisket or a slice of bread, a handful of raisins or a tart from the pastry-cook's, and a glass of water, had the rest of the time till their return for study, in which I made the greater

progress, from that greater clearness of head and quicker apprehension which usually attend temperance in eating and drinking.

And now it was that, being on some occasion made ashamed of my ignorance in figures, which I had twice failed in learning when at school, I took Cocker's book of Arithmetick, and went through the whole by myself with great ease. I also read Seller's and Shermy's books of Navigation, and became acquainted with the little geometry they contain; but never proceeded far in that science. And I read about this time Locke on *Human Understanding*, and the *Art of Thinking*, by Messrs. du Port Royal.\*

---

\* Cabanis, in the notice which he prepared of Franklin shortly after the philosopher's death, says, in reference to his reading at this time: "We have it also from him that about this time, for the first, he read a very bad translation of the Provincial Letters. He was ravished by them. He read them over many times. They were one of the French books he most esteemed."—*Œuvres Complètes*, vol. v., p. 228.

The discrepancy between these two statements provokes the remark that at the time Franklin wrote this portion of the Memoirs he did not know Cabanis. It is probable that he read and was much impressed by both works, and at different epochs of his life and with different persons dwelt sometimes upon the importance of one and sometimes of the other to his intellectual training.

Speaking of the three particular books which may have remotely contributed to form the historian of the Roman Empire, Gibbon says: "From the Provincial Letters of Pascal, which almost every year I have perused with new pleasure, I learned to manage the weapon of grave and temperate irony even on subjects of ecclesiastical solemnity."—*Miscellaneous Works of Gibbon*, in 5 vols., vol. i. p. 96.

Reasoning *post hoc propter hoc*, Franklin might have made the same confession with equal propriety. Not Gibbon himself was a master of a more refined and decorous irony. I will venture to give an illustration of his skill in the management of this most dangerous weapon

While I was intent on improving my language, I met with an English grammar (I think it was Greenwood's), at the end of which there were two little sketches of the arts of rhetoric and logic, the latter finishing with a specimen of a dispute in the Socratic method; and soon after I procur'd Xenophon's Memorable Things of Socrates, wherein there are many instances of the same method. I was charm'd with it, adopted it, dropt my abrupt contradiction and positive argumentation, and put on the humble inquirer and doubter. And being then, from reading Shaftesbury and Collins, become a real doubter in many points of our religious doctrine, I found this method safest for myself and very embarrassing to those against whom I used it; therefore I took a delight in it, practis'd it continually, and grew very artful and expert in drawing people, even of superior knowledge, into concessions, the consequences

---

here, only because it has never been in print. It appears in a letter written by the Doctor shortly after his final return from Europe, to his friend Le Ray de Chaumont, one of whose houses at Passy he occupied during his entire residence near the Court of France. I am indebted to his grandson, M. le Ray de Chaumont, who still lives in Paris in the enjoyment of a green old age, for a copy of the original. In this letter, referring to a claim sent in by his maître d'hôtel, for bills already once paid, the Doctor says:

"As to Tinck, the maître d'hôtel, he was fairly paid in money for every just demand he could make against us, and we have his receipts in full. But there are knaves in the world whom no writing can bind, and when you think you have finished with them, they come with demands after demands, *sans fin*. He was continually saying of himself, *Je suis honnête homme, je suis honnête homme*. But I always suspected he was mistaken; and so it proves."—ED.

of which they did not foresee, entangling them in difficulties out of which they could not extricate themselves, and so obtaining victories that neither myself nor my cause always deserved. I continu'd this method some few years, but gradually left it, retaining only the habit of expressing myself in terms of modest diffidence; never using, when I advanced any thing that may possibly be disputed, the words *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, or any others that give the air of positiveness to an opinion; but rather say, I conceive or apprehend a thing to be so and so; it appears to me, or *I should think it so or so*, for such and such reasons; or *I imagine it to be so*; or *it is so, if I am not mistaken*. This habit, I believe, has been of great advantage to me when I have had occasion to inculcate my opinions, and persuade men into measures that I have been from time to time engag'd in promoting; and, as the chief ends of conversation are to *inform* or to be *informed*, to *please* or to *persuade*, I wish well-meaning, sensible men would not lessen their power of doing good by a positive, assuming manner, that seldom fails to disgust, tends to create opposition, and to defeat every one of those purposes for which speech was given to us, to wit, giving or receiving information or pleasure. For, if you would inform, a positive and dogmatical manner in advancing your sentiments may provoke contradiction and prevent a candid attention. If you wish information and improvement from the knowledge of others, and yet at the

same time express yourself as firmly fix'd in your present opinions, modest, sensible men, who do not love disputation, will probably leave you undisturbed in the possession of your error. And by such a manner, you can seldom hope to recommend yourself in *pleasing* your hearers, or to persuade those whose concurrence you desire. Pope says, judiciously :

*"Men should be taught as if you taught them not,  
And things unknown propos'd as things forgot;"*

farther recommending to us

"To speak, tho' sure, with seeming diffidence."

And he might have coupled with this line that which he has coupled with another, I think, less properly,

"For want of modesty is want of sense."

If you ask, Why less properly? I must repeat the lines,

"Immodest words admit of no defense,  
For want of modesty is want of sense."

Now, is not *want of sense* (where a man is so unfortunate as to want it) some apology for his *want of modesty*? and would not the lines stand more justly thus?

"Immodest words admit *but* this defense,  
That want of modesty is want of sense."

This, however, I should submit to better judgments.

My brother had, in 1720 or 1721, begun to print a newspaper. It was the second that appeared in America, and was called the New England Courant.

The only one before it was the Boston News-Letter. I remember his being dissuaded by some of his friends from the undertaking, as not likely to succeed, one newspaper being, in their judgment, enough for America.\* At this time (1771) there are not less than five-and-twenty. He went on, however, with the undertaking, and after having worked in composing the types and printing off the sheets, I was employed to carry the papers thro' the streets to the customers.

He had some ingenious men among his friends, who amus'd themselves by writing little pieces for this paper, which gain'd it credit and made it more in demand, and these gentlemen often visited us. Hearing their conversations, and their accounts of the approbation their papers were received with, I was excited to try my hand among them; but, being still a boy, and suspecting that my brother would object to printing anything of mine in his paper if he knew it to be mine, I contrived to disguise my

---

\* "This was written from recollection, and it is not surprising that, after the lapse of fifty years, the author's memory should have failed him in regard to a fact of small importance. The "New England Courant" was the fourth newspaper that appeared in America. The first number of the Boston News-Letter was published April 24th, 1704. This was the first newspaper in America. The Boston Gazette commenced December 21st, 1719; the American Weekly Mercury, at Philadelphia, December 22d, 1719; the New England Courant, August 21st, 1721. Dr. Franklin's error of memory probably originated in the circumstance of his brother having been the printer of the Boston Gazette when it was first established. This was the second newspaper published in America."—S.



hand, and, writing an anonymous paper, I put it in at night under the door of the printing-house. It was found in the morning, and communicated to his writing friends when they call'd in as usual. They read it, commented on it in my hearing, and I had the exquisite pleasure of finding it met with their approbation, and that, in their different guesses at the author, none were named but men of some character among us for learning and ingenuity. I suppose now that I was rather lucky in my judges, and that perhaps they were not really so very good ones as I then esteem'd them.

Encourag'd, however, by this, I wrote and convey'd in the same way to the press several more papers which were equally approv'd; and I kept my secret till my small fund of sense for such performances was pretty well exhausted, and then I discovered it, when I began to be considered a little more by my brother's acquaintance, and in a manner that did not quite please him, as he thought, probably with reason, that it tended to make me too vain. And, perhaps, this might be one occasion of the differences that we began to have about this time. Though a brother, he considered himself as my master, and me as his apprentice, and, accordingly, expected the same services from me as he would from another, while I thought he demean'd me too much in some he requir'd of me, who from a brother expected more indulgence. Our disputes were often brought before our father, and I fancy I

was either generally in the right, or else a better pleader, because the judgment was generally in my favor. But my brother was passionate, and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss; and, thinking my apprenticeship very tedious, I was continually wishing for some opportunity of shortening it, which at length offered in a manner unexpected.\*

One of the pieces in our newspaper on some political point, which I have now forgotten, gave offense to the Assembly. He was taken up, censur'd, and imprison'd for a month, by the speaker's warrant, I suppose, because he would not discover his author. I too was taken up and examin'd before the council; but, tho' I did not give them any satisfaction, they content'd themselves with admonishing me, and dismissed me, considering me, perhaps, as an apprentice, who was bound to keep his master's secrets.

During my brother's confinement, which I resented a good deal, notwithstanding our private differences, I had the management of the paper; and I made bold to give our rulers some rubs in it, which my brother took very kindly, while others began to consider me in an unfavorable light, as a young genius that had a turn for libelling and satyr. My brother's discharge was accompany'd with an

---

\* I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me through my whole life.

order of the House (a very odd one), that “*James Franklin should no longer print the paper called the New England Courant.*”

There was a consultation held in our printing-house among his friends, what he should do in this case. Some proposed to evade the order by changing the name of the paper; but my brother, seeing inconveniences in that, it was finally concluded on as a better way, to let it be printed for the future under the name of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN; and to avoid the censure of the Assembly, that might fall on him as still printing it by his apprentice, the contrivance was that my old indenture should be return'd to me, with a full discharge on the back of it, to be shown on occasion, but to secure to him the benefit of my service, I was to sign new indentures for the remainder of the term, which were to be kept private. A very flimsy scheme it was; however, it was immediately executed, and the paper went on accordingly, under my name for several months.

At length, a fresh difference arising between my brother and me, I took upon me to assert my freedom, presuming that he would not venture to produce the new indentures. It was not fair in me to take this advantage, and this I therefore reckon one of the first errata of my life; but the unfairness of it weighed little with me, when under the impressions of resentment for the blows his passion too often urged him to bestow upon me, though he was

otherwise not an ill-natur'd man: perhaps I was too saucy and provoking.

When he found I would leave him, he took care to prevent my getting employment in any other printing-house of the town, by going round and speaking to every master, who accordingly refus'd to give me work. I then thought of going to New York, as the nearest place where there was a printer; and I was rather inclin'd to leave Boston when I reflected that I had already made myself a little obnoxious to the governing party, and, from the arbitrary proceedings of the Assembly in my brother's case, it was likely I might, if I stay'd, soon bring myself into scrapes; and farther, that my indiscrete disputations about religion began to make me pointed at with horror by good people as an infidel or atheist. I determin'd on the point, but my father now siding with my brother, I was sensible that, if I attempted to go openly, means would be used to prevent me. My friend Collins, therefore, undertook to manage a little for me. He agreed with the captain of a New York sloop for my passage, under the notion of my being a young acquaintance of his, that had got a naughty girl with child, whose friends would compel me to marry her, and therefore I could not appear or come away publicly. So I sold some of my books to raise a little money, was taken on board privately, and as we had a fair wind, in three days I found myself in New York, near 300 miles from

home, a boy of but 17,\* without the least recommendation to, or knowledge of any person in the place, and with very little money in my pocket.

My inclinations for the sea were by this time worn out, or I might now have gratify'd them. But, having a trade, and supposing myself a pretty good workman, I offer'd my service to the printer in the place, old Mr. William Bradford, who had been the first printer in Pennsylvania, but removed from thence upon the quarrel of George Keith. He could give me no employment, having little to do, and help enough already; but says he, "My son at Philadelphia has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death; if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." Philadelphia was a hundred miles further; I set out, however, in a boat for Amboy, leaving my chest and things to follow me round by sea.

In crossing the bay, we met with a squall that tore our rotten sails to pieces, prevented our getting into the Kill, and drove us upon Long Island. In our way, a drunken Dutchman, who was a passenger too, fell overboard; when he was sinking, I reached through the water to his shock pate, and drew him up, so that we got him in again. His ducking sobered him a little, and he went to sleep, taking first out of his pocket a book, which he desired I would dry for him. It proved to be my old

---

\* This was in October, 1723.—ED.

favorite author, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, in Dutch, finely printed on good paper, with copper cuts, a dress better than I had ever seen it wear in its own language. I have since found that it has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and suppose it has been more generally read than any other book, except perhaps the Bible. Honest John was the first that I know of who mix'd narration and dialogue; a method of writing very engaging to the reader, who in the most interesting parts finds himself, as it were, brought into the company and present at the discourse. De Foe in his *Cruso*, his *Moll Flanders*, *Religious Courtship*, *Family Instructor*, and other pieces, has imitated it with success; and Richardson has done the same in his *Pamela*, etc.

When we drew near the island, we found it was at a place where there could be no landing, there being a great surff on the stony beach. So we dropt anchor, and swung round towards the shore. Some people came down to the water edge and hallow'd to us, as we did to them; but the wind was so high, and the surff so loud, that we could not hear so as to understand each other. There were canoes on the shore, and we made signs, and hallow'd that they should fetch us; but they either did not understand us, or thought it impracticable, so they went away, and night coming on, we had no remedy but to wait till the wind should abate; and,

in the mean time, the boatman and I concluded to sleep, if we could ; and so crowded into the scuttle, with the Dutchman, who was still wet, and the spray beating over the head of our boat, leak'd thro' to us, so that we were soon almost as wet as he. In this manner we lay all night, with very little rest ; but, the wind abating the next day, we made a shift to reach Amboy before night, having been thirty hours on the water, without victuals, or any drink but a bottle of filthy rum, the water we sail'd on being salt.

In the evening I found myself very feverish, and went in to bed ; but, having read somewhere that cold water drank plentifully was good for a fever, I follow'd the prescription, sweat plentifully most of the night, my fever left me, and in the morning, crossing the ferry, I proceeded on my journey on foot, having fifty miles to Burlington, where I was told I should find boats that would carry me the rest of the way to Philadelphia.

It rained very hard all the day ; I was thoroughly soak'd, and by noon a good deal tired ; so I stopt at a poor inn, where I staid all night, beginning now to wish that I had never left home. I cut so miserable a figure, too, that I found, by the questions ask'd me, I was suspected to be some runaway servant, and in danger of being taken up on that suspicion. However, I proceeded the next day, and got in the evening to an inn, within eight or ten miles of Burlington, kept by one Dr. Brown. He entered

into conversation with me while I took some refreshment, and, finding I had read a little, became very sociable and friendly. Our acquaintance continu'd as long as he liv'd. He had been, I imagine, an itinerant doctor, for there was no town in England, or country in Europe, of which he could not give a very particular account. He had some letters, and was ingenious, but much of an unbeliever, and wickedly undertook, some years after, to travestie the Bible in doggrel verse, as Cotton had done Virgil. By this means he set many of the facts in a very ridiculous light, and might have hurt weak minds if his work had been published; but it never was.

At his house I lay that night, and the next morning reach'd Burlington, but had the mortification to find that the regular boats were gone a little before my coming, and no other expected to go before Tuesday, this being Saturday; wherefore I returned to an old woman in the town, of whom I had bought gingerbread to eat on the water, and ask'd her advice. She invited me to lodge at her house till a passage by water should offer; and being tired with my foot travelling, I accepted the invitation. She understanding I was a printer, would have had me stay at that town and follow my business, being ignorant of the stock necessary to begin with. She was very hospitable, gave me a dinner of ox-cheek with great good will, accepting only of a pot of ale in return; and I thought myself fixed till Tuesday



should come. However, walking in the evening by the side of the river, a boat came by, which I found was going towards Philadelphia, with several people in her. They took me in, and, as there was no wind, we row'd all the way; and about midnight, not having yet seen the city, some of the company were confident we must have passed it, and would row no farther; the others knew not where we were; so we put toward the shore, got into a creek, landed near an old fence, with the rails of which we made a fire, the night being cold, in October, and there we remained till daylight. Then one of the company knew the place to be Cooper's Creek, a little above Philadelphia, which we saw as soon as we got out of the creek, and arriv'd there about eight or nine o'clock on the Sunday morning, and landed at the Market-street wharf.

I have been the more particular in this description of my journey, and shall be so of my first entry into that city, that you may in your mind compare such unlikely beginnings with the figure I have since made there. I was in my working dress, my best cloaths being to come round by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuff'd out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with travelling, rowing and want of rest, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first

refus'd it, on account of my rowing ; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps thro' fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and ask'd for bisket, intending such as we had in Boston ; but they, it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bad him give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surpriz'd at the quantity, but took it, and, having no room in my pockets, walk'd off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father ; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chesnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water ; and, being

filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy thro' labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continu'd so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me. This was, therefore, the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia.

Walking down again toward the river, and, looking in the faces of people, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance I lik'd, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. "Here," says he, "is one place that entertains strangers, but it is not a reputable house; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better." He brought me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. Here I got a dinner; and, while I was eating it, several sly questions were asked me, as it seemed to be suspected from my youth and appearance, that I might be some runaway.

After dinner, my sleepiness return'd, and being shown to a bed, I lay down without undressing, and

slept till six in the evening, was call'd to supper, went to bed again very early, and slept soundly till next morning. Then I made myself as tidy as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, travelling on horse-back, had got to Philadelphia before me. He introduc'd me to his son, who receiv'd me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately suppli'd with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who, perhaps, might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then till fuller business should offer.

The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, "Neighbor," says Bradford, "I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one." He ask'd me a few questions, put a composing stick in my hand to see how I work'd, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do; and, taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town's people that had a good will for him, enter'd into a conversation on his present undertaking and prospects; while Bradford, not discovering that he was the other printer's father, on Keimer's saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business into his own hands,

drew him on by artful questions, and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what interest he reli'd on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one of them was a crafty old sophister, and the other a mere novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surpris'd when I told him who the old man was.

Keimer's printing-house, I found, consisted of an old shatter'd press, and one small, worn-out font of English, which he was then using himself, composing an *Elegy* on *Aquila Rose*, before mentioned, an ingenious young man, of excellent character, much respected in the town, clerk of the Assembly, and a pretty poet. Keimer made verses too, but very indifferently. He could not be said to write them, for his manner was to compose them in the types directly out of his head. So there being no copy, but one pair of cases, and the *Elegy* likely to require all the letter, no one could help him. I endeavor'd to put his press (which he had not yet us'd, and of which he understood nothing) into order fit to be work'd with; and, promising to come and print off his *Elegy* as soon as he should have got it ready, I return'd to Bradford's, who gave me a little job to do for the present, and there I lodged and dieted. A few days after, Keimer sent for me to print off the *Elegy*. And now he had got another pair of cases, and a pamphlet to reprint, on which he set me to work.

These two printers I found poorly qualified for their business. Bradford had not been bred to it, and was very illiterate; and Keimer, tho' something of a scholar, was a mere compositor, knowing nothing of presswork. He had been one of the French prophets, and could act their enthusiastic agitations.\* At this time he did not profess any particular religion, but something of all on occasion; was very ignorant of the world, and had, as I afterward found, a good deal of the knave in his composition. He did not like my lodging at Bradford's while I work'd with him. He had a house, indeed, but without furniture, so he could not lodge me; but he got me a lodging at Mr. Read's, before mentioned, who was the owner of his house; and, my chest and clothes being come by this time, I made rather a more respectable appearance in the eyes of Miss Read than I had done when she first happen'd to see me eating my roll in the street.

I began now to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town, that were lovers of reading, with whom I spent my evenings very pleasantly; and gaining money by my industry and frugality, I lived very agreeably, forgetting Boston as much as I could, and not desiring that any there should know where I resided, except my friend Collins, who was in my secret, and kept it when I wrote to him. At length, an incident happened that sent

---

\* M. Laboulaye presumes Keimer was one of the *Canisards* or Protestants of the Cevennes, so persecuted by Louis XIV.—Ed.

me back again much sooner than I had intended. I had a brother-in-law, Robert Holmes, master of a sloop that traded between Boston and Delaware. He being at Newcastle, forty miles below Philadelphia, heard there of me, and wrote me a letter mentioning the concern of my friends in Boston at my abrupt departure, assuring me of their good will to me, and that every thing would be accommodated to my mind if I would return, to which he exhorted me very earnestly. I wrote an answer to his letter, thank'd him for his advice, but stated my reasons for quitting Boston fully and in such a light as to convince him I was not so wrong as he had apprehended.

Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at Newcastle, and Captain Holmes, happening to be in company with him when my letter came to hand, spoke to him of me, and show'd him the letter. The governor read it, and seem'd surpris'd when he was told my age. He said I appear'd a young man of promising parts, and therefore should be encouraged; the printers at Philadelphia were wretched ones; and, if I would set up there, he made no doubt I should succeed; for his part, he would procure me the public business, and do me every other service in his power. This my brother-in-law afterwards told me in Boston, but I knew as yet nothing of it; when, one day, Keimer and I being at work together near the window, we saw the governor and another gentleman (which proved to be Colonel French, of Newcastle), finely dress'd,

come directly across the street to our house, and heard them at the door.

Keimer ran down immediately, thinking it a visit to him; but the governor inquir'd for me, came up, and with a condescension and politeness I had been quite unus'd to, made me many compliments, desired to be acquainted with me, blam'd me kindly for not having made myself known to him when I first came to the place, and would have me away with him to the tavern, where he was going with Colonel French to taste, as he said, some excellent Madeira. I was not a little surprised, and Keimer star'd like a pig poison'd. I went, however, with the governor and Colonel French to a tavern, at the corner of Third-street, and over the Madeira he propos'd my setting up my business, laid before me the probabilities of success, and both he and Colonel French assur'd me I should have their interest and influence in procuring the public business of both governments. On my doubting whether my father would assist me in it, Sir William said he would give me a letter to him, in which he would state the advantages, and he did not doubt of prevailing with him. So it was concluded I should return to Boston in the first vessel, with the governor's letter recommending me to my father. In the mean time the intention was to be kept a secret, and I went on working with Keimer as usual, the governor sending for me now and then to dine with him, a very great honor I thought it, and conversing



with me in the most affable, familiar, and friendly manner imaginable.

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel offer'd for Boston. I took leave of Keimer as going to see my friends. The governor gave me an ample letter, saying many flattering things of me to my father, and strongly recommending the project of my setting up at Philadelphia as a thing that must make my fortune. We struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak; we had a blustering time at sea, and were oblig'd to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn. We arriv'd safe, however, at Boston in about a fortnight. I had been absent seven months, and my friends had heard nothing of me; for my br. Holmes was not yet return'd, and had not written about me. My unexpected appearance surpriz'd the family; all were, however, very glad to see me, and made me welcome, except my brother. I went to see him at his printing-house. I was better dress'd than ever while in his service, having a genteel new suit from head to foot, a watch, and my pockets lin'd with near five pounds sterling in silver. He receiv'd me not very frankly, look'd me all over, and turn'd to his work again.

The journeymen were inquisitive where I had been, what sort of a country it was, and how I lik'd it. I prais'd it much, and the happy life I led in it, expressing strongly my intention of returning to it; and, one of them asking what kind of money we

had there, I produc'd a handful of silver, and spread it before them, which was a kind of raree-show they had not been us'd to, paper being the money of Boston. Then I took an opportunity of letting them see my watch; and, lastly (my brother still grum and sullen), I gave them a piece of eight to drink, and took my leave. This visit of mine offended him extreamly; for, when my mother some time after spoke to him of a reconciliation, and of her wishes to see us on good terms together, and that we might live for the future as brothers, he said I had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken.

My father received the governor's letter with some apparent surprise, but said little of it to me for some days, when Capt. Holmes returning he show'd it to him, ask'd him if he knew Keith, and what kind of man he was; adding his opinion that he must be of small discretion to think of setting a boy up in business who wanted yet three years of being at man's estate. Holmes said what he could in favor of the project, but my father was clear in the impropriety of it, and at last gave a flat denial to it. Then he wrote a civil letter to Sir William, thanking him for the patronage he had so kindly offered me, but declining to assist me as yet in setting up, I being, in his opinion, too young to be trusted with the management of a business so important, and for which the preparation must be so expensive.

My friend and companion Collins, who was a clerk in the post-office, pleas'd with the account I gave him of my new country, determin'd to go thither also ; and, while I waited for my father's determination, he set out before me by land to Rhode Island, leaving his books, which were a pretty collection of mathematicks and natural philosophy, to come with mine and me to New York, where he propos'd to wait for me.

My father, tho' he did not approve Sir William's proposition, was yet pleas'd that I had been able to obtain so advantageous a character from a person of such note where I had resided, and that I had been so industrious and careful as to equip myself so handsomely in so short a time ; therefore, seeing no prospect of an accommodation between my brother and me, he gave his consent to my returning again to Philadelphia, advis'd me to behave respectfully to the people there, endeavor to obtain the general esteem, and avoid lampooning and libeling, to which he thought I had too much inclination ; telling me, that by steady industry and a prudent parsimony I might save enough by the time I was one-and-twenty to set me up ; and that, if I came near the matter, he would help me out with the rest. This was all I could obtain, except some small gifts as tokens of his and my mother's love, when I embark'd again for New York, now with their approbation and their blessing.

The sloop putting in at Newport, Rhode Island,

I visited my brother John, who had been married and settled there some years. He received me very affectionately, for he always lov'd me. A friend of his, one Vernon, having some money due to him in Pensilvania, about thirty-five pounds currency, desired I would receive it for him, and keep it till I had his directions what to remit it in. Accordingly, he gave me an order. This afterwards occasion'd me a good deal of uneasiness.

At Newport we took in a number of passengers for New York, among which were two young women, companions, and a grave, sensible, matron-like Quaker woman, with her attendants. I had shown an obliging readiness to do her some little services, which impress'd her I suppose with a degree of good will toward me; therefore, when she saw a daily growing familiarity between me and the two young women, which they appear'd to encourage, she took me aside, and said, "Young man, I am concern'd for thee, as thou has no friend with thee, and seems not to know much of the world, or of the snares youth is expos'd to; depend upon it, those are very bad women; I can see it in all their actions; and if thee art not upon thy guard, they will draw thee into some danger; they are strangers to thee, and I advise thee, in a friendly concern for thy welfare, to have no acquaintance with them." As I seem'd at first not to think so ill of them as she did, she mentioned some things she had observ'd and heard that had escap'd

my notice, but now convinc'd me she was right. I thank'd her for her kind advice, and promis'd to follow it. When we arriv'd at New York, they told me where they liv'd, and invited me to come and see them; but I avoided it, and it was well I did; for the next day the captain miss'd a silver spoon and some other things, that had been taken out of his cabbin, and, knowing that these were a couple of strumpets, he got a warrant to search their lodgings, found the stolen goods, and had the thieves punish'd. So, tho' we had escap'd a sunken rock, which we scrap'd upon in the passage, I thought this escape of rather more importance to me.

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arriv'd there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstript me. While I liv'd in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continu'd a sober as well as an industrious lad; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence, he had acquir'd a habit of sotting with brandy; and I found by his own account, and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behav'd

very oddly. He had gam'd, too, and lost his money, so that I was oblig'd to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which prov'd extremely inconvenient to me.

The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet),\* hearing from the captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desir'd he would bring me to see him.

\* Governor Burnet was appointed governor of the Colony of New York and New Jersey on the 19th of April, 1720. He entered upon the duties of his office in September following. He was a man of scholarly tastes, fond of accumulating books, with a turn for theological speculation, which he indulged in making a commentary upon the three periods contained in the twelfth chapter of Daniel. The governor married a daughter of Cornelius Van Horne, of New York, who died soon. He was transferred to the governorship of Boston in July, 1728. His administration there, however, was not of long duration. He was taken ill from exposure on a fishing excursion, and died on the 7th of September, 1729.

The governor's interest in theology did not commend him especially to the authorities at home.

The Bishop of London complained that clergymen already provided with his license to preach in the colonies were subject to a new examination, conducted in a somewhat unusual manner by the governor.

"Your method (wrote Richard West, the governor's brother-in-law, Solicitor-General to the Board of Trade) is to prescribe him a text, to give him a Bible for his companion, and then lock him into a room by himself, and if he does not in some stated time produce a sermon to your satisfaction, you peremptorily refuse to grant him your instrument (permission to preach). The consequence is, the man must starve. \* \* \* I have seen a great many complaints against governors, but then nobody was surprised, because I could always give some pecuniary reason for what they had done. You surely are the first who ever brought himself into difficulties by an inordinate *care of souls*; and I am sure that makes no part of your commission."

For the best account of this worthy man, see Whitehead's *Contributions to East Jersey History*, pp. 156-168.—ED.

I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober. The gov'r. treated me with great civility, show'd me his library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me; which, to a poor boy like me, was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finish'd our journey. Collins wished to be employ'd in some counting-house; but, whether they discover'd his dramming by his breath, or by his behaviour, tho' he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continu'd lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's, he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distress'd to think what I should do in case of being call'd on to remit it.

His drinking continu'd, about which we sometimes quarrel'd; for, when a little intoxicated, he was very fractious. Once, in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be row'd home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must, or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you

please." The others said, "Let us row; what signifies it?" But, my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continu'd to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along, stepping on the thwarts, toward me, when he came up and struck at me, I clapped my hand under his crutch, and, rising, pitched him head-foremost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pull'd her out of his reach; and ever when he drew near the boat, we ask'd if he would row, striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchange'd a civil word afterwards, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt; but I never heard of him after.

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life; and this affair show'd that my father was not much out in his judgment when he suppos'd me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on read-



ing his letter, said he was too prudent. There was great difference in persons; and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able; I am resolv'd to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality, that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up, a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on the governor, probably some friend, that knew him better, would have advis'd me not to rely on him, as I afterwards heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believ'd him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little print'g-house, amounting by my computation to about one hundred pounds sterling. He lik'd it, but ask'd me if my being on the spot in England to chuse the types, and see that every thing was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances, and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be

advantageous. "Then," says he "get yourself ready to go with Annis;" which was the annual ship, and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before Annis sail'd, so I continu'd working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from me, and in daily apprehensions of being call'd upon by Vernon, which, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalm'd off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I consider'd, with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanc'd some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." So I din'd upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or

make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I liv'd on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasms and lov'd argumentation. We therefore had many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and had trepann'd him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees lead to the point, and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first, "*What do you intend to infer from that?*" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it is said, "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*" He likewise kept the Seventh day, Sabbath; and these two points were essentials with him. I dislik'd both; but agreed to admit them upon condition of his adopting the doctrine of using no animal food. "I doubt,"

said he, "my constitution will not bear that." I assur'd him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great glutton, and I promised myself some diversion in half starving him. He agreed to try the practice, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. We had our victuals dress'd, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighborhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, to be prepar'd for us at different times, in all which there was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and the whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that, and that for the common, abruptly, without the least inconvenience, so that I think there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, tired of the project, long'd for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and order'd a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but, it being brought too soon upon table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came.

I had made some courtship during this time to Miss Read. I had a great respect and affection for her, and had some reason to believe she had the same for me; but, as I was about to take a long voyage, and we were both very young, only a little

above eighteen, it was thought most prudent by her mother to prevent our going too far at present, as a marriage, if it was to take place, would be more convenient after my return, when I should be, as I expected, set up in my business. Perhaps, too, she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be.

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all lovers of reading. The two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brogden; the other was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me, for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters, too fond of criticising. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferr'd on what we read.

Ralph was inclin'd to pursue the study of poetry, not doubting but he might become eminent in it, and make his fortune by it, alleging that the best

poets must, when they first began to write, make as many faults as he did. Osborne dissuaded him, assur'd him he had no genius for poetry, and advis'd him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to; that, in the mercantile way, tho' he had no stock, he might, by his diligence and punctuality, recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approv'd the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no farther.

On this it was propos'd that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of our own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention by agreeing that the task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm, which describes the descent of a Deity, When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and, having little inclination, had done nothing. He then show'd me his piece for my opinion, and I much approv'd it, as it appear'd to me to have great merit. "Now," says he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in any thing of mine, but makes 1000 criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece, and produce it as yours; I will pretend

not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcrib'd it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, etc.; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and join'd in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and propos'd some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than poet, so he dropt the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production; having restrain'd himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery. "But who would have imagin'd," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improv'd the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; and yet, good God! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had plaid him, and Osborne was a little laugh at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till *Pope* cured him.\* He became, however, a pretty good

---

\* In one of the later editions of the *Dunciad* occur the following lines :

"Silence, ye wolves ! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,  
And makes Night hideous—answer him, ye owls."

Book iii. line 165.

To this the poet adds the following note :

"James Ralph, a name inserted after the first editions, not known till he writ a swearing-piece called *Sawney*, very abusive of Dr. Swift, Mr. Gay and myself. These lines allude to a thing of his entitled *Night*, a poem. This low writer attended his own works with panegyrics in the journals, and once in particular praised himself highly above Mr. Addison, in wretched remarks upon that author's account of English poets, printed in a London journal, September, 1728. He was wholly illiterate and knew no language, not even French. Being advised to read the rules of dramatic poetry before he began a play, he smiled and replied, 'Shakespeare writ without rules.' He ended at last in the common sink of all such writers, a political newspaper, to which he was recommended by his friend Arnal, and received a small pittance for pay ; and being detected in writing on both sides on one and the same day, he publicly justified the morality of his conduct."

In the first book of the *Dunciad*, line 215, there is another allusion to Ralph :

"And see ! the very Gazetteers give o'er,  
Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more."

To this Bishop Warburton appends the following note :

"*Gazetteers*.—A band of ministerial writers hired at the price mentioned in the note on book II, ver. 316, who, on the very day their patron quitted his post, laid down their paper and declared they would never more meddle in politics."

In the note here referred to Warburton says :

"The *Daily Gazetteer* was a title given very properly to certain papers, each of which lasted but a day. Into this as a common sink were received all the trash which had been before dispersed in several journals and circulated at the public expense of the nation. The authors were



prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion again to mention the other two, I shall just remark here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happen'd first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfill'd his promise.

---

the same obscure men ; though sometimes relieved by occasional essays from statesmen, courtiers, bishops, deans and doctors. The meaner sort were rewarded with money ; others with places or benefices, from a hundred to a thousand a year. It appears from the *Report of the Secret Committee*, for inquiring into the conduct of R. Earl of O., 'that no less than *fifty thousand seventy-seven pounds eighteen shillings* were paid to authors and printers of newspapers, such as Free Britons, Daily Courants, Corn-Cutters, Journals, Gazetteers and other political papers, between February 10, 1731, and February 10, 1741,' which shows the benevolence of one minister to have expended for the current dullness of ten years in Britain double the sum which gained Louis XIV. so much honor in annual pensions to learned men all over Europe. In which and in a much longer time not a pension at court nor preferment in the Church or universities of any consideration was bestowed on any man distinguished for his learning, separately from party-merit or pamphlet-writing."

"It is worth a reflection, that of all the panegyrics bestowed by these writers on this great minister, not one is at this day extant or remembered ; nor even so much credit done to his personal character by all they have written as by one short occasional compliment of our author :

"Seen him I have ; but in his happier hour  
Of social pleasure, ill exchanged for power ;  
Seen him uncumbered by the venal tribe,  
*Smile* without *art* and *win* without a bribe."—ED.

The governor, seeming to like my company, had me frequently to his house, and his setting me up was always mention'd as a fixed thing. I was to take with me letters recommendatory to a number of his friends, besides the letter of credit to furnish me with the necessary money for purchasing the press and types, paper, etc. For these letters I was appointed to call at different times, when they were to be ready; but a future time was still named. Thus he went on till the ship, whose departure too had been several times postponed, was on the point of sailing. Then, when I call'd to take my leave and receive the letters, his secretary, Dr. Bard, came out to me and said the governor was extremely busy in writing, but would be down at Newcastle before the ship, and there the letters would be delivered to me.

Ralph, though married, and having one child, had determin'd to accompany me in this voyage. It was thought he intended to establish a correspondence, and obtain goods to sell on commission; but I found afterwards, that, thro' some discontent with his wife's relations, he purposed to leave her on their hands, and never return again. Having taken leave of my friends, and interchang'd some promises with Miss Read, I left Philadelphia in the ship, which anchor'd at Newcastle. The governor was there; but when I went to his lodging, the secretary came to me from him with the civillest message in the world, that he could not then see

me, being engaged in business of the utmost importance, but should send the letters to me on board, wish'd me heartily a good voyage and a speedy return, etc. I returned on board a little puzzled, but still not doubting.

Mr. Andrew Hamilton, a famous lawyer of Philadelphia, had taken passage in the same ship for himself and son, and with Mr. Denham, a Quaker merchant, and Messrs. Onion and Russel, masters of an iron work in Maryland, had engag'd the great cabin; so that Ralph and I were forced to take up with a berth in the steerage, and none on board knowing us, were considered as ordinary persons. But Mr. Hamilton and his son (it was James, since governor) return'd from Newcastle to Philadelphia, the father being recall'd by a great fee to plead for a seized ship; and, just before we sail'd, Colonel French coming on board, and showing me great respect, I was more taken notice of, and, with my friend Ralph, invited by the other gentlemen to come into the cabin, there being now room. Accordingly, we remov'd thither.

Understanding that Colonel French had brought on board the governor's despatches, I ask'd the captain for those letters that were to be under my care. He said all were put into the bag together and he could not then come at them; but, before we landed in England, I should have an opportunity of picking them out; so I was satisfied for the pres-

ent, and we proceeded on our voyage. We had a sociable company in the cabin, and lived uncommonly well, having the addition of all Mr. Hamilton's stores, who had laid in plentifully. In this passage Mr. Denham contracted a friendship for me that continued during his life. The voyage was otherwise not a pleasant one, as we had a great deal of bad weather.

When we came into the Channel, the captain kept his word with me, and gave me an opportunity of examining the bag for the governor's letters. I found none upon which my name was put as under my care. I picked out six or seven, that, by the handwriting, I thought might be the promised letters, especially as one of them was directed to Basket, the king's printer, and another to some stationer. We arriv'd in London the 24th of December, 1724. I waited upon the stationer, who came first in my way, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," says he; but, opening the letter, "O! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a compleat rascal, and I will have nothing to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So, putting the letter into my hand, he turn'd on his heel and left me to serve some customer. I was surprized to find these were not the governor's letters; and, after recollecting and comparing circumstances, I began to doubt his sincerity. I found my friend Denham, and

opened the whole affair to him. He let me into Keith's character; told me there was not the least probability that he had written any letters for me; that no one, who knew him, had the smallest dependence on him; and he laugh't at the notion of the governor's giving me a letter of credit, having, as he said, no credit to give. On my expressing some concern about what I should do, he advised me to endeavor getting some employment in the way of my business. "Among the printers here," said he, "you will improve yourself, and when you return to America, you will set up to greater advantage."

We both of us happen'd to know, as well as the stationer, that Riddlesden, the attorney, was a very knave. He had half ruin'd Miss Read's father by persuading him to be bound for him. By this letter it appear'd there was a secret scheme on foot to the prejudice of Hamilton (suppos'd to be then coming over with us); and that Keith was concerned in it with Riddlesden. Denham, who was a friend of Hamilton's, thought he ought to be acquainted with it; so, when he arriv'd in England, which was soon after, partly from resentment and ill-will to Keith and Riddlesden, and partly from good-will to him, I waited on him, and gave him the letter. He thank'd me cordially, the information being of importance to him; and from that time he became my friend, greatly to my advantage afterwards on many occasions.

But what shall we think of a governor's playing

such pitiful tricks, and imposing so grossly on a poor ignorant boy ! It was a habit he had acquired. He wish'd to please everybody ; and, having little to give, he gave expectations. He was otherwise an ingenious, sensible man, a pretty good writer, and a good governor for the people, tho' not for his constituents, the proprietaries, whose instructions he sometimes disregarded. Several of our best laws were of his planning and passed during his administration.

Ralph and I were inseparable companions. We took lodgings together in Little Britain at three shillings and sixpence a week—as much as we could then afford. He found some relations, but they were poor, and unable to assist him. He now let me know his intentions of remaining in London, and that he never meant to return to Philadelphia. He had brought no money with him, the whole he could muster having been expended in paying his passage. I had fifteen pistoles ; so he borrowed occasionally of me to subsist, while he was looking out for business. He first endeavored to get into the playhouse, believing himself qualify'd for an actor ; but Wilkes,\* to whom he apply'd, advis'd him candidly not to think of that employment, as it was impossible he should succeed in it. Then he propos'd to Roberts, a publisher in Paternoster Row, to write for him a weekly paper like the Spectator,

---

\* A comedian.—ED.

on certain conditions, which Roberts did not approve. Then he endeavored to get employment as a hackney writer, to copy for the stationers and lawyers about the Temple, but could find no vacancy.

I immediately got into work at Palmer's, then a famous printing-house in Bartholomew Close, and here I continu'd near a year. I was pretty diligent, but spent with Ralph a good deal of my earnings in going to plays and other places of amusement. We had together consumed all my pistoles, and now just rubbed on from hand to mouth. He seem'd quite to forget his wife and child, and I, by degrees, my engagements with Miss Read, to whom I never wrote more than one letter, and that was to let her know I was not likely soon to return. This was another of the great errata of my life, which I should wish to correct if I were to live it over again. In fact, by our expenses, I was constantly kept unable to pay my passage.

At Palmer's I was employed in composing for the second edition of Wollaston's "Religion of Nature." Some of his reasonings not appearing to me well founded, I wrote a little metaphysical piece in which I made remarks on them. It was entitled "A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain." I inscribed it to my friend Ralph; I printed a small number. It occasion'd my being more consider'd by Mr. Palmer as a young man of some ingenuity, tho' he seriously expostulated

with me upon the principles of my pamphlet, which to him appear'd abominable. My printing this pamphlet was another erratum.\* While I lodg'd in Little Britain, I made an acquaintance with one Wilcox, a bookseller, whose shop was at the next door. He had an immense collection of second-hand books. Circulating libraries were not then in use; but we agreed that, on certain reasonable terms, which I have now forgotten, I might take, read, and return any of his books. 'Tis I esteem'd a great advantage, and I made as much use of it as I could.

My pamphlet by some means falling into the hands of one Lyons, a surgeon, author of a book entitled "The Infallibility of Human Judgment," it occasioned an acquaintance between us. He took great notice of me, called on me often to converse on those subjects, carried me to the Horns, a pale alehouse in — Lane, Cheapside, and introduced me to Dr. Mandeville, author of the "Fable of the Bees," who had a club there, of which he was the soul, being a most facetious, entertaining companion. Lyons, too, introduced me to Dr. Pemberton, at Batson's Coffee-house, who promis'd to give me an opportunity, some time or other, of seeing Sir Isaac

---

\* Until recently no copy of this tract was supposed to be in existence, but a copy was discovered a few years ago in London, and a fac-simile of it obtained for Mr. James Parton, who gave it to the New York Historical Society. It is given at length in vol. i. of Parton's *Life of Franklin*. Another copy has been found in England in different type, showing that the pamphlet was reprinted in Franklin's lifetime.—ED.



Newton, of which I was extremely desirous; but this never happened.

I had brought over a few curiosities, among which the principal was a purse made of the asbestos, which purifies by fire. Sir Hans Sloane heard of it, came to see me, and invited me to his house in Bloomsbury Square, where he show'd me all his curiosities, and persuaded me to let him add that to the number, for which he paid me handsomely.\*

In our house there lodg'd a young woman, a milliner, who, I think, had a shop in the Cloisters. She had been genteelly bred, was sensible and lively, and of most pleasing conversation. Ralph read plays to her in the evenings, they grew intimate, she took another lodging, and he followed her. They liv'd together some time; but, he being still out of business, and her income not sufficient to maintain them with her child, he took a resolution of going from London, to try for a country school, which he thought himself well qualified to undertake, as he wrote an excellent hand, and was

---

\* From the letter which he addressed Mr. Sloane on this subject one might infer that the persuasion was on the Doctor's side. "As you are noted," he wrote—he was then in his 19th year—"to be a lover of curiosities, I have informed you of these; and if you have any inclination to purchase or see them, let me know your pleasure by a line for me at the Golden Fan, Little Britain, and I will wait upon you with them. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"B. FRANKLIN.

"P. S. I expect to be out of town in two or three days, and therefore beg an immediate answer."—ED.

a master of arithmetic and accounts. This, however, he deemed a business below him, and confident of future better fortune, when he should be unwilling to have it known that he once was so meanly employed, he changed his name, and did me the honor to assume mine; for I soon after had a letter from him, acquainting me that he was settled in a small village (in Berkshire, I think it was, where he taught reading and writing to ten or a dozen boys, at sixpence each per week), recommending Mrs. T—— to my care, and desiring me to write to him, directing for Mr. Franklin, school-master, at such a place.

He continued to write frequently, sending me large specimens of an epic poem which he was then composing, and desiring my remarks and corrections. These I gave him from time to time, but endeavor'd rather to discourage his proceeding. One of Young's Satires was then just published. I copy'd and sent him a great part of it, which set in a strong light the folly of pursuing the Muscs with any hope of advancement by them.\* All was in

---

\* "Th' abandoned manners of our writing train  
May tempt mankind to think religion vain;  
But in their fate, their habit, and their mien,  
That gods there are is evidently seen:  
Heav'n stands absolv'd by vengeance on their pen,  
And marks the murderers of fame from men:  
Through meagre jaws they draw their venal breath,  
As ghastly as their brothers in Macbeth:  
Their feet thro' faithless leather meets the dirt.  
And oftener changed their principles than shirt:  
The transient vestments of these frugal men  
Hasten to paper for our mirth again:

vain; sheets of the poem continued to come by every post. In the mean time, Mrs. T——, having on his account lost her friends and business, was often in distresses, and us'd to send for me, and borrow what I could spare to help her out of them. I grew fond of her company, and, being at that time under no religious restraint, and presuming upon

Too soon (O merry, melancholy fate !)  
 They beg in rhyme, and warble thro' a grate ;  
 The man lampooned, forgets it at the sight ;  
 The friend thro' pity gives, the foe through spite ;  
 And though full conscious of his injur'd purse,  
 Lintot relents, nor Curll can wish them worse.

"An author, 'tis a venerable name !  
 How few deserve it and what numbers claim.  
 Unless'd with sense, above the peers refin'd,  
 Who shall stand up, dictators to mankind?  
 Nay, who dare shine, if not in virtue's cause?  
 That sole proprietor of just applause.

"Ye restless men ! who pant for letter'd praise,  
 With whom would you consult to gain the bays?  
 With those great authors whose fam'd works you read?  
 'Tis well ; go, then, consult the laurel'd shade,  
 What answer will the laurel'd shade return?  
 Hear it and tremble, he commands you burn  
 The noblest works, his envy'd genius writ,  
 That boasts of naught more excellent than wit.  
 If this be true, as 'tis a truth most dread,  
 Woe to the page which has not that to plead !  
 Fontaine and Chaucer, dying, wish'd unwrote  
 The sprightliest efforts of their wanton thought :  
 Sidney and Waller, brightest sons of fame,  
 Condemn'd the charm of ages to the flame.

"Thus ends your courted fame—does lucre then,  
 The sacred thirst of gold, betray your pen?  
 In prose 'tis blamable, in verse 'tis worse,  
 Provokes the Muse, extorts Apollo's curse ;  
 His sacred influence never should be sold :  
 'Tis arrant simony to sing for gold ;  
 'Tis immortality should fire your mind,  
 Scorn a less paymaster than all mankind."

YOUNG, vol. iii. *Ejusd.* ii., p. 70.—ED

my importance to her, I attempted familiarities (another erratum) which she repuls'd with a proper resentment, and acquainted him with my behaviour. This made a breach between us; and, when he returned again to London, he let me know he thought I had cancell'd all the obligations he had been under to me. So I found I was never to expect his repaying me what I lent to him, or advanc'd for him. This, however, was not then of much consequence, as he was totally unable; and in the loss of his friendship I found myself relieved from a burthen. I now began to think of getting a little money beforehand, and, expecting better work, I left Palmer's to work at Watts's, near Lincoln's Inn Fields, a still greater printing-house. Here I continued all the rest of my stay in London.

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been us'd to in America, where presswork is mix'd with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an alehouse boy who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day

a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he suppos'd, to drink *strong* beer, that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu* or sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbad my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts, transposing my pages, breaking my matter, etc., etc., if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chappel ghost, which they said ever

haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself oblig'd to comply and pay the money, convinc'd of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquir'd considerable influence. I propos'd some reasonable alterations in their chappel\* laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding they could with me be supply'd from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumb'd with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz., three half-pence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sopping with beer all day, were often, by not paying, out of credit at the alehouse, and us'd to make interest with me to get beer; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watch'd the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I

---

\* "A printing-house is always called a chapel by the workmen, the origin of which appears to have been, that printing was first carried on in England in an antient chapel converted into a printing-house, and the title has been preserved by tradition. The *bien venu* among the printers answers to the terms entrance and footing among mechanics; thus a journeyman, on entering a printing-house, was accustomed to pay one or more gallons of beer for the good of the chapel: this custom was falling into disuse thirty years ago; it is very properly rejected entirely in the United States."—W. T. F.

stood engag'd for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteem'd a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon all work of dispatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.

My lodging in Little Britain being too remote, I found another in Duke-street, opposite to the Romish Chapel. It was two pair of stairs backwards, at an Italian warehouse. A widow lady kept the house; she had a daughter, and a maid servant, and a journeyman who attended the warehouse, but lodg'd abroad. After sending to inquire my character at the house where I last lodg'd, she agreed to take me in at the same rate, 3s. 6d. per week; cheaper, as she said, from the protection she expected in having a man lodge in the house. She was a widow, an elderly woman; had been bred a Protestant, being a clergyman's daughter, but was converted to the Catholic religion by her husband, whose memory she much revered; had lived much among people of distinction, and knew a thousand anecdotes of them as far back as the times of Charles the Second. She was lame in her knees with the gout, and, therefore, seldom stirred out of her room, so sometimes wanted company; and hers was so

highly amusing to me, that I was sure to spend an evening with her whenever she desired it. Our supper was only half an anchovy each, on a very little strip of bread and butter, and half a pint of ale between us; but the entertainment was in her conversation. My always keeping good hours, and giving little trouble in the family, made her unwilling to part with me; so that, when I talk'd of a lodging I had heard of, nearer my business, for two shillings a week, which, intent as I now was on saving money, made some difference, she bid me not think of it, for she would abate me two shillings a week for the future; so I remained with her at one shilling and sixpence as long as I staid in London.

In a garret of her house there lived a maiden lady of seventy, in the most retired manner, of whom my landlady gave me this account: that she was a Roman Catholic, had been sent abroad when young, and lodg'd in a nunnery with an intent of becoming a nun; but, the country not agreeing with her, she returned to England, where, there being no nunnery, she had vow'd to lead the life of a nun, as near as might be done in those circumstances. Accordingly, she had given all her estate to charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on, and out of this sum she still gave a great deal in charity, living herself on water-gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. She had lived many years in that garret, being permitted to remain there gratis by



successive Catholic tenants of the house below, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her to confess her every day. "I have ask'd her," says my landlady, "how she, as she liv'd, could possibly find so much employment for a confessor?" "Oh," said she, "it is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*." I was permitted once to visit her. She was chearful and polite, and convers'd pleasantly. The room was clean, but had no other furniture than a matras, a table with a crucifix and book, a stool which she gave me to sit on, and a picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica displaying her handkerchief, with the miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to me with great seriousness. She look'd pale, but was never sick; and I give it as another instance on how small an income, life and health may be supported.

At Watts's printing-house I contracted an acquaintance with an ingenious young man, one Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most printers; was a tolerable Latinist, spoke French, and lov'd reading. I taught him and a friend of his to swim at twice going into the river, and they soon became good swimmers. They introduc'd me to some gentlemen from the country, who went to Chelsea by water to see the College and Don Saltero's curiosities. In our return, at the request of the company, whose curiosity Wygate had excited, I stripped and leaped into the river,

and swam from near Chelsea to Blackfryar's, performing on the way many feats of activity, both upon and under water, that surpris'd and pleas'd those to whom they were novelties.

I had from a child been ever delighted with this exercise, had studied and practis'd all Thevenot's motions and positions, added some of my own, aiming at the graceful and easy as well as the useful. All these I took this occasion of exhibiting to the company, and was much flatter'd by their admiration; and Wygate, who was desirous of becoming a master, grew more and more attach'd to me on that account, as well as from the similarity of our studies. He at length proposed to me travelling all over Europe together, supporting ourselves everywhere by working at our business. I was once inclined to it; but, mentioning it to my good friend Mr. Denham, with whom I often spent an hour when I had leisure, he dissuaded me from it, advising me to think only of returning to Pennsylvania, which he was now about to do.

I must record one trait of this good man's character. He had formerly been in business at Bristol, but failed in debt to a number of people, compounded and went to America. There, by a close application to business as a merchant, he acquir'd a plentiful fortune in a few years. Returning to England in the ship with me, he invited his old creditors to an entertainment, at which he thank'd them for the easy composition they had favored him with, and,

when they expected nothing but the treat, every man at the first remove found under his plate an order on a banker for the full amount of the unpaid remainder with interest.

He now told me he was about to return to Philadelphia, and should carry over a great quantity of goods in order to open a store there. He propos'd to take me over as his clerk, to keep his books, in which he would instruct me, copy his letters, and attend the store. He added, that, as soon as I should be acquainted with mercantile business, he would promote me by sending me with a cargo of flour and bread, etc., to the West Indies, and procure me commissions from others which would be profitable; and, if I manag'd well, would establish me handsomely. The thing pleas'd me; for I was grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months I had spent in Pennsylvania, and wish'd again to see it; therefore I immediately agreed on the terms of fifty pounds a year, Pennsylvania money; less, indeed, than my present gettings as a compositor, but affording a better prospect.

I now took leave of printing, as I thought, for ever, and was daily employ'd in my new business, going about with Mr. Denham among the tradesmen to purchase various articles, and seeing them pack'd up, doing errands, calling upon workmen to dispatch, etc.; and, when all was on board, I had a few days' leisure. On one of these days, I was, to

my surprise, sent for by a great man I knew only by name, a Sir William Wyndham, and I waited upon him. He had heard by some means or other of my swimming from Chelsea to Blackfriar's, and of my teaching Wygate and another young man to swim in a few hours. He had two sons, about to set out on their travels; he wish'd to have them first taught swimming, and proposed to gratify me handsomely if I would teach them. They were not yet come to town, and my stay was uncertain, so I could not undertake it; but, from this incident, I thought it likely that, if I were to remain in England and open a swimming-school, I might get a good deal of money; and it struck me so strongly, that, had the overture been sooner made me, probably I should not so soon have returned to America. After many years, you and I had something of more importance to do with one of these sons of Sir William Wyndham, become Earl of Egremont, which I shall mention in its place.

Thus I spent about eighteen months in London; most part of the time I work'd hard at my business, and spent but little upon myself except in seeing plays and in books. My friend Ralph had kept me poor; he owed me about twenty-seven pounds, which I was now never likely to receive; a great sum out of my small earnings! I lov'd him, notwithstanding, for he had many amiable qualities. I had by no means improv'd my fortune; but I had picked up some very ingenious acquaintance, whose

conversation was of great advantage to me; and I had read considerably.

We sail'd from Gravesend on the 23d of July, 1726. For the incidents of the voyage, I refer you to my Journal, where you will find them all minutely related. Perhaps the most important part of that journal is the *plan*\* to be found in it, which I formed at sea, for regulating my future conduct in life. It is the more remarkable, as being formed when I was so young, and yet being pretty faithfully adhered to quite thro' to old age.

We landed in Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where I found sundry alterations. Keith was no longer governor, being superseded by Major Gordon. I met him walking the streets as a common citizen. He seem'd a little asham'd at seeing me, but pass'd without saying any thing. I should have been as much asham'd at seeing Miss Read, had not her friends, despairing with reason of my return after the receipt of my letter, persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, which was done in my absence. With him, however, she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to cohabit with him or bear his name, it being now said that he had another wife. He was a worthless fellow.

---

\* The "plan" referred to as the most "important part of the Journal," is not found in the manuscript Journal which was left among Franklin's papers. The copy of the Journal that was found was made at Reading in 1787; the original is probably lost. See *Sparks' Memoir of Franklin*, Appendix II.—ED.

tho' an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends. He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there. Keimer had got a better house, a shop well supply'd with stationery, plenty of new types, a number of hands, tho' none good, and seem'd to have a great deal of business.

Mr. Denham took a store in Water-street, where we open'd our goods; I attended the business diligently, studied accounts, and grew, in a little time, expert at selling. We lodg'd and boarded together; he counsell'd me as a father, having a sincere regard for me. I respected and lov'd him, and we might have gone on together very happy; but, in the beginning of February, 1728, when I had just pass'd my twenty-first year, we both were taken ill. My distemper was a pleurisy, which very nearly carried me off. I suffered a good deal, gave up the point in my own mind, and was rather disappointed when I found myself recovering, regretting, in some degree, that I must now, some time or other, have all that disagreeable work to do over again. I forget what his distemper was; it held him a long time, and at length carried him off. He left me a small legacy in a nuncupative will, as a token of his kindness for me, and he left me once more to the wide world; for the store was taken into the care of his executors, and my employment under him ended.

My brother-in-law, Holmes, being now at Phila-

delphia, advised my return to my business ; and Keimer tempted me, with an offer of large wages by the year, to come and take the management of his printing-house, that he might better attend his stationer's shop. I had heard a bad character of him in London from his wife and her friends, and was not fond of having any more to do with him. I tri'd for farther employment as a merchant's clerk ; but, not readily meeting with any, I clos'd again with Keimer. I found in his house these hands : Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pensilvanian, thirty years of age, bred to country work ; honest, sensible, had a great deal of solid observation, was something of a reader, but given to drink. Stephen Potts, a young countryman of full age, bred to the same, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humor, but a little idle. These he had agreed with at extream low wages per week, to be rais'd a shilling every three months, as they would deserve by improving in their business ; and the expectation of these high wages, to come on hereafter, was what he had drawn them in with. Meredith was to work at press, Potts at book-binding, which he, by agreement, was to teach them, though he knew neither one nor t'other. John —, a wild Irishman, brought up to no business, whose service, for four years, Keimer had purchased from the captain of a ship ; he, too, was to be made a pressman. George Webb, an Oxford scholar, whose time for four years he had likewise bought, intending him

for a compositor, of whom more presently; and David Harry, a country boy, whom he had taken apprentice.

I soon perceiv'd that the intention of engaging me at wages so much higher than he had been us'd to give, was, to have these raw, cheap hands form'd thro' me; and, as soon as I had instructed them, then they being all articed to him, he should be able to do without me. I went on, however, very cheerfully, put his printing-house in order, which had been in great confusion, and brought his hands by degrees to mind their business and to do it better.

It was an odd thing to find an Oxford scholar in the situation of a bought servant. He was not more than eighteen years of age, and gave me this account of himself; that he was born in Gloucester, educated at a grammar-school there, had been distinguish'd among the scholars for some apparent superiority in performing his part, when they exhibited plays; belong'd to the Witty Club there, and had written some pieces in prose and verse, which were printed in the Gloucester newspapers; thence he was sent to Oxford; where he continued about a year, but not well satisfi'd, wishing of all things to see London, and become a player. At length, receiving his quarterly allowance of fifteen guineas, instead of discharging his debts he walk'd out of town, hid his gown in a furze bush, and footed it to London, where, having no friend to advise him, he fell into bad company, soon spent his guineas,



found no means of being introduc'd among the players, grew necessitous, pawn'd his cloaths, and wanted bread. Walking the street very hungry, and not knowing what to do with himself, a crimp's bill was put into his hand, offering immediate entertainment and encouragement to such as would bind themselves to serve in America. He went directly, sign'd the indentures, was put into the ship, and came over, never writing a line to acquaint his friends what was become of him. He was lively, witty, good-natur'd, and a pleasant companion, but idle, thoughtless, and imprudent to the last degree.

John, the Irishman, soon ran away ; with the rest I began to live very agreeably, for they all respected me the more, as they found Keimer incapable of instructing them, and that from me they learned something daily. We never worked on Saturday, that being Keimer's Sabbath, so I had two days for reading. My acquaintance with ingenious people in the town increased. Keimer himself treated me with great civility and apparent regard, and nothing now made me uneasy but my debt to Vernon, which I was yet unable to pay, being hitherto but a poor œconomist. He, however, kindly made no demand of it.

Our printing-house often wanted sorts, and there was no letter-founder in America ; I had seen types cast at James's in London, but without much attention to the manner ; however, I now contrived a mould, made use of the letters we had as puncheons,

struck the matrices in lead, and thus supply'd in a pretty tolerable way all deficiencies. I also engrav'd several things on occasion ; I made the ink ; I was warehouseman, and everything, and, in short, quite a fac-totum.

But, however serviceable I might be, I found that my services became every day of less importance, as the other hands improv'd in the business ; and, when Keimer paid my second quarter's wages, he let me know that he felt them too heavy, and thought I should make an abatement. He grew by degrees less civil, put on more of the master, frequently found fault, was captious, and seem'd ready for an outbreaking. I went on, nevertheless, with a good deal of patience, thinking that his encumber'd circumstances were partly the cause. At length a trifle snapt our connections ; for, a great noise happening near the court-house, I put my head out of the window to see what was the matter. Keimer, being in the street, look'd up and saw me, call'd out to me in a loud voice and angry tone to mind my business, adding some reproachful words, that nettled me the more for their publicity, all the neighbors who were looking out on the same occasion, being witnesses how I was treated. He came up immediately into the printing-house, continu'd the quarrel, high words pass'd on both sides, he gave me the quarter's warning we had stipulated, expressing a wish that he had not been oblig'd to so long a warning. I told him his wish was unneces-

sary, for I would leave him that instant; and so, taking my hat, walk'd out of doors, desiring Meredith, whom I saw below, to take care of some things I left, and bring them to my lodgings.

Meredith came accordingly in the evening, when we talked my affair over. He had conceiv'd a great regard for me, and was very unwilling that I should leave the house while he remain'd in it. He dissuaded me from returning to my native country, which I began to think of; he remind'd me that Keimer was in debt for all he possess'd; that his creditors began to be uneasy; that he kept his shop miserably, sold often without profit for ready money, and often trusted without keeping accounts; that he must therefore fail, which would make a vacancy I might profit of. I objected my want of money. He then let me know that his father had a high opinion of me, and, from some discourse that had pass'd between them, he was sure would advance money to set us up, if I would enter into partnership with him. "My time," says he, "will be out with Keimer in the spring; by that time we may have our press and types in from London. I am sensible I am no workman; if you like it, your skill in the business shall be set against the stock I furnish, and we will share the profits equally."

The proposal was agreeable, and I consented; his father was in town and approv'd of it; the more as he saw I had great influence with his son, had prevail'd on him to abstain long from dram-drink-

ing, and he hop'd might break him of that wretched habit entirely, when we came to be so closely connected. I gave an inventory to the father, who carry'd it to a merchant; the things were sent for, the secret was to be kept till they should arrive, and in the mean time I was to get work, if I could, at the other printing-house. But I found no vacancy there, and so remain'd idle a few days, when Keimer, on a prospect of being employ'd to print some paper money in New Jersey, which would require cuts and various types that I only could supply, and apprehending Bradford might engage me and get the jobb from him, sent me a very civil message, that old friends should not part for a few words, the effect of sudden passion, and wishing me to return. Meredith persuaded me to comply, as it would give more opportunity for his improvement under my daily instructions; so I return'd, and we went on more smoothly than for some time before. The New Jersey jobb was obtain'd, I contriv'd a copper-plate press for it, the first that had been seen in the country; I cut several ornaments and checks for the bills. We went together to Burlington, where I executed the whole to satisfaction; and he received so large a sum for the work as to be enabled thereby to keep his head much longer above water.

At Burlington I made an acquaintance with many principal people of the province. Several of them had been appointed by the Assembly a committee to attend the press, and take care that no more

bills were printed than the law directed. They were therefore, by turns, constantly with us, and generally he who attended, brought with him a friend or two for company. My mind having been much more improv'd by reading than Keimer's, I suppose it was for that reason my conversation seem'd to be more valu'd. They had me to their houses, introduced me to their friends, and show'd me much civility; while he, tho' the master, was a little neglected. In truth, he was an odd fish; ignorant of common life, fond of rudely opposing receiv'd opinions, slovenly to extream dirtiness, enthusiastic in some points of religion, and a little knavish withal.

We continu'd there near three months; and by that time I could reckon among my acquired friends, Judge Allen, Samuel Bustill, the secretary of the Province, Isaac Pearson, Joseph Cooper, and several of the Smiths, members of Assembly, and Isaac Decow, the surveyor-general. The latter was a shrewd, sagacious old man, who told me that he began for himself, when young, by wheeling clay for the brickmakers, learned to write after he was of age, carri'd the chain for surveyors, who taught him surveying, and he had now by his industry, acquir'd a good estate; and says he, "I foresee that you will soon work this man out of his business, and make a fortune in it at Philadelphia." He had not then the least intimation of my intention to set up there or anywhere. These friends were afterwards

of great use to me, as I occasionally was to some of them. They all continued their regard for me as long as they lived.

Before I enter upon my public appearance in business, it may be well to let you know the then state of my mind with regard to my principles and morals, that you may see how far those influenc'd the future events of my life. My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's Lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations; in short, I soon became a thorough Deist. My arguments perverted some others, particularly Collins and Ralph; but, each of them having afterwards wrong'd me greatly without the least compunction, and recollecting Keith's conduct towards me (who was another freethinker), and my own towards Vernon and Miss Read, which at times gave me great trouble, I began to suspect that this doctrine, tho' it might be true, was not very

useful. My London pamphlet,\* which had for its motto these lines of Dryden :

"Whatever is, is right. Though purblind man  
Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest link :  
His eyes not carrying to the equal beam,  
That poises all above ;"

and from the attributes of God, his infinite wisdom, goodness and power, concluded that nothing could possibly be wrong in the world, and that vice and virtue were empty distinctions, no such things exist-

---

\* Printed in 1725.

Dr. Franklin in a part of a letter to Mr. B. Vaughan, dated Nov. 9, 1779, gives a further account of this pamphlet, in these words :

"It was addressed to Mr. J. R., that is, James Ralph, then a youth of about my age, and my intimate friend ; afterwards a political writer and historian. The purport of it was to prove the doctrine of fate, from the supposed attributes of God ; in some such manner as this : that in erecting and governing the world, as he was infinitely wise, he knew what would be best ; infinitely good, he must be disposed, and infinitely powerful, he must be able to execute it : consequently all is right. There were only an hundred copies printed, of which I gave a few to friends, and afterwards disliking the piece, as conceiving it might have an ill tendency, I burnt the rest, except one copy, the margin of which was filled with manuscript notes by Syms, author of the *Infallibility of Human Judgment*, who was at that time another of my acquaintance in London. I was not nineteen years of age when it was written. In 1730, I wrote a piece on the other side of the question, which began with laying for its foundation this fact : 'That almost all men in all ages and countries, have at times made use of prayer.' Thence I reasoned, that if all things are ordained, prayer must among the rest be ordained. But as prayer can produce no change in things that are ordained, praying must then be useless and an absurdity. God would therefore not ordain praying if everything else was ordained. But praying exists, therefore all things are not ordained, etc. This pamphlet was never printed, and the manuscript has been long lost. The great uncertainty I found in metaphysical reasonings disgusted me, and I quitted that kind of reading and study for others more satisfactory."—ED.

ing, appear'd now not so clever a performance as I once thought it; and I doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceiv'd into my argument, so as to infect all that follow'd, as is common in metaphysical reasonings.

I grew convinc'd that *truth, sincerity and integrity* in dealings between man and man were of the utmost importance to the felicity of life; and I form'd written resolutions, which still remain in my journal book, to practice them ever while I lived. Revelation had indeed no weight with me, as such; but I entertain'd an opinion that, though certain actions might not be bad *because* they were forbidden by it, or good *because* it commanded them, yet probably those actions might be forbidden *because* they were bad for us, or commanded *because* they were beneficial to us, in their own natures, all the circumstances of things considered. And this persuasion, with the kind hand of Providence, or some guardian angel, or accidental favorable circumstances and situations, or all together, preserved me, thro' this dangerous time of youth, and the hazardous situations I was sometimes in among strangers, remote from the eye and advice of my father, without any willful gross immorality or injustice, that might have been expected from my want of religion.\* I say willful, because the in-

---

\* The words, "Some foolish intrigues with low women excepted, which from the expense were rather more prejudicial to me than to them," effaced on the revision, and the sentence which follows in the text written in the margin.—ED.



stances I have mentioned had something of *necessity* in them, from my youth, inexperience, and the knavery of others. I had therefore a tolerable character to begin the world with; I valued it properly, and determin'd to preserve it.

We had not been long return'd to Philadelphia before the new types arriv'd from London. We settled with Keimer, and left him by his consent before he heard of it. We found a house to hire near the market, and took it. To lessen the rent, which was then but twenty-four pounds a year, tho' I have since known it to let for seventy, we took in Thomas Godfrey, a glazier, and his family, who were to pay a considerable part of it to us, and we to board with them. We had scarce opened our letters and put our press in order, before George House, an acquaintance of mine, brought a countryman to us, whom he had met in the street inquiring for a printer. All our cash was now expended in the variety of particulars we had been obliged to procure, and this countryman's five shillings, being our first-fruits, and coming so seasonably, gave me more pleasure than any crown I have since earned; and the gratitude I felt toward House has made me often more ready than perhaps I should otherwise have been to assist young beginners.

There are croakers in every country, always boding its ruin. Such a one then lived in Philadelphia; a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking; his name

was Samuel Mickle. This gentleman, a stranger to me, stopt one day at my door, and asked me if I was the young man who had lately opened a new printing-house. Being answered in the affirmative, he said he was sorry for me, because it was an expensive undertaking, and the expense would be lost; for Philadelphia was a sinking place, the people already half bankrupts, or near being so; all appearances to the contrary, such as new buildings and the rise of rents, being to his certain knowledge fallacious; for they were, in fact, among the things that would soon ruin us. And he gave me such a detail of misfortunes now existing, or that were soon to exist, that he left me half melancholy. Had I known him before I engaged in this business, probably I never should have done it. This man continued to live in this decaying place, and to declaim in the same strain, refusing for many years to buy a house there, because all was going to destruction; and at last I had the pleasure of seeing him give five times as much for one as he might have bought it for when he first began his croaking.

I should have mentioned before, that, in the autumn of the preceding year, I had form'd most of my ingenious acquaintance into a club of mutual improvement, which we called the JUNTO; we met on Friday evenings. The rules that I drew up required that every member, in his turn, should produce one or more queries on any point of Morais,

Politics, or Natural Philosophy, to be discuss'd by the company; and once in three months produce and read an essay of his own writing, on any subject he pleased. Our debates were to be under the direction of a president, and to be conducted in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth, without fondness for dispute, or desire of victory; and, to prevent warmth, all expressions of positiveness in opinions, or direct contradiction, were after some time made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties.

The first members were Joseph Breintnal, a copyer of deeds for the scriveners, a good-natur'd, friendly, middle-ag'd man, a great lover of poetry, reading all he could meet with, and writing some that was tolerable; very ingenious in many little Nicknackeries, and of sensible conversation.

Thomas Godfrey, a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called Hadley's Quadrant. But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in every thing said, or was for ever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us.

Nicholas Scull, a surveyor, afterward surveyor-general, who lov'd books, and sometimes made a few verses.

William Parsons, bred a shoemaker, but, loving reading, had acquir'd a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, that he afterwards laugh'd at it. He also became surveyor-general.

William Maugridge, a joiner, a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man.

Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb I have characteriz'd before.

Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty ; a lover of punning and of his friends.

And William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk, about my age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals of almost any man I ever met with. He became afterwards a merchant of great note, and one of our provincial judges. Our friendship continued without interruption to his death, upward of forty years ; and the club continued almost as long, and was the best school of philosophy, morality, and politics that then existed in the province ; for our queries, which were read the week preceding their discussion, put us upon reading with attention upon the several subjects, that we might speak more to the purpose ; and here, too, we acquired better habits of conversation, every thing being studied in our rules which might prevent our disgusting each other. From hence the long continuance of the club, which I

shall have frequent occasion to speak further of hereafter.\*

---

\* In a careful and interesting paper read before the American Philosophical Society by Dr. Patterson, one of its Vice-Presidents, on the 25th of May, 1843, in commemoration of its Centennial Anniversary, will be found much new and important information about the Junto. As this paper is not generally accessible, my readers will excuse me for quoting somewhat freely from its pages. Dr. Patterson says:

"The Junto was, properly speaking, a debating society. At first it met at a tavern; but subsequently at the house of one of the members, Robert Grace, whom Franklin characterizes as 'a gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty, a lover of punning and of his friends.' I am happy to say that Robert Grace is not without his successors in our present society.

"One of the rules of the Club was that the institution should be kept a secret; the intention being, as Franklin states, to avoid applications of improper persons for admittance. The number of members at any one time was limited to twelve, but vacancies were filled as they occurred, and the names of twenty-three members are preserved.

"On admission into the Club, a course was followed which is too remarkable in itself, and in its bearing upon a difficult question in the history of this Society, not to be here introduced. It is thus presented in Franklin's papers:

"'Any person to be qualified—to stand up, and lay his hand upon his breast, and be asked these questions, viz :

"'1st. Have you any particular disrespect to any present member?  
Answer: I have not.

"'2d. Do you sincerely declare that you love mankind in general, of what profession or religion soever? Ans. I do.

"'3d. Do you think any person ought to be harmed in his body, name, or goods, for mere speculative opinions, or his external way of worship? Ans. No.

"'4th. Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavor impartially to find and receive it yourself, and communicate it to others? Ans. Yes.'

"No minutes of the proceedings of the original Junto are preserved, but Franklin mentions in his Autobiography several questions of great interest which were discussed at it, and several pieces read before it and afterwards published in his newspaper.

But my giving this account of it here is to show something of the interest I had, every one of these

---

"It was at one time proposed to increase the number of members ; but to this Franklin was opposed, and instead of it he made 'a proposal that every member separately should form a subordinate club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connection with the Junto.' 'This project was approved, and every member undertook to form a club ; but they did not all succeed. Five or six only were completed, which were called by different names, as the Vine, the Union, the Band.' Of these subordinate companies, a brief paragraph in Franklin's Life is the only remaining record.

"While Franklin was abroad, he shows by his correspondence that he still held the institution of his youth in affectionate remembrance. This appears repeatedly in his letters to his friend Hugh Roberts. He calls it 'the good old Club,' 'the ancient Junto.' So late as 1765, he says : 'I wish you would continue to meet the Junto, notwithstanding that some effects of our political misunderstanding may sometimes appear there. It is now perhaps one of the oldest clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the best, in the king's dominions.' Even in 1766, he writes : 'Remember me affectionately to the Junto.'

"It appears, then, that the Junto continued in existence about forty years. But did it keep up its original character ? This may well be doubted. The members grew gradually to be old men, and it is hardly to be supposed that they would submit to the task of writing essays, or would formally propose questions, and afterwards debate them. Their fortunes were made, their education completed ; and it is therefore much more probable that when the remnant of the once youthful and active Junto met together, they indulged themselves in social conversation and temperate conviviality. Such is said to be the tradition in the Roberts family ; and it is confirmed by a letter from Dr. Franklin to their ancestor, written in 1761, in which he says : 'You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto. I wish you would do it oftener. Since we have held that Club till we are grown gray together, let us hold it out to the end. For my own part, I find I love company, chat, a laugh, a glass, and even a song, as well as ever ; and at the same time relish better than I used to do the grave observations and wise sentences of old men's conversation ; so that I am sure the Junto will be still as agreeable to me as it ever has been. I therefore hope it will not be discontinued, as long as we are able to crawl together.'"

exerting themselves in recommending business to us.  
Breintnal particularly procur'd us from the Quakers

---

In May, 1765, Hugh Roberts writes as follows to Dr. Franklin: "I sometimes visit the worthy remains of the ancient Junto, for whom I have a high esteem; but alas, the political, polemical divisions have in some measure contributed to lessen that harmony we there formerly enjoyed." To this letter Franklin answers in July following, urging his friend's attendance at the Junto, almost in the same terms used some years before, and which we have just quoted, and then closes his exhortation in the following touching words: "We loved and still love one another. We are grown gray together, and yet it is too early to part. Let us sit till the evening of life is spent. The last hours are always the most joyous. When we can stay no longer, it is time enough then to bid each other good-night, separate and go quietly to bed."

The following rules for the regulation of the Junto, drawn up in 1728, will give a clearer idea of its character, and, I may add, of the character of its members. Forty years later the Junto became the nucleus of the American Philosophical Society, of which Franklin was the first President:\*

Have you read over these queries this morning, in order to consider what you might have to offer the Junto touching any one of them? viz.:

1. Have you met with anything in the author you last read, remarkable or suitable to be communicated to the Junto, particularly in history, morality, poetry, physic, travels, mechanic arts, or other parts of knowledge?
2. What new story have you lately heard, agreeable for telling in conversation?
3. Hath any citizen in your knowledge failed in his business lately, and what have you heard of the cause?
4. Have you lately heard of any citizen's thriving well, and by what means?
5. Have you lately heard how any present rich man, here or elsewhere, got his estate?
6. Do you know of a fellow-citizen, who has lately done a worthy action, deserving praise and imitation; or who has lately committed an error, proper for us to be warned against and avoid?

\* *Sparks' Works of Franklin*, vol. ii. p. 9.

the printing forty sheets of their history, the rest being to be done by Keimer; and upon this we

---

7. What unhappy effects of intemperance have you lately observed or heard; of imprudence, of passion, or of any other vice or folly?

8. What happy effects of temperance, of prudence, of moderation, or of any other virtue?

9. Have you or any of your acquaintance been lately sick or wounded? If so, what remedies were used, and what were their effects?

10. Whom do you know that are shortly going voyages or journeys, if one should have occasion to send by them?

11. Do you think of any thing at present in which the Junto may be serviceable to mankind, to their country, to their friends, or to themselves?

12. Hath any deserving stranger arrived in town since last meeting, that you have heard of? And what have you heard or observed of his character or merits? And whether, think you, it lies in the power of the Junto to oblige him, or encourage him as he deserves?

13. Do you know of any deserving young beginner lately set up, whom it lies in the power of the Junto any way to encourage?

14. Have you lately observed any defect in the laws of your country, of which it would be proper to move the legislature for an amendment? Or do you know of any beneficial law that is wanting?

15. Have you lately observed any encroachment on the just liberties of the people?

16. Hath anybody attacked your reputation lately? And what can the Junto do towards securing it?

17. Is there any man whose friendship you want, and which the Junto, or any of them, can procure for you?

18. Have you lately heard any member's character attacked, and how have you defended it?

19. Hath any man injured you from whom it is in the power of the Junto to procure redress?

20. In what manner can the Junto, or any of them, assist you in any of your honorable designs?

21. Have you any weighty affair on hand, in which you think the advice of the Junto may be of service?

22. What benefits have you lately received from any man not present?



work'd exceedingly hard, for the price was low. It was a folio, pro patria size, in pica, with long primer notes. I compos'd of it a sheet a day, and Meredith worked it off at press; it was often eleven at night, and sometimes later, before I had finished my distribution for the next day's work, for the little

23. Is there any difficulty in matters of opinion, of justice, and injustice, which you would gladly have discussed at this time?

24. Do you see any thing amiss in the present customs or proceedings of the Junto which might be amended?

When the Philosophical Society was instituted, a book containing some of the questions discussed by the Junto was put into the hands of Dr. William Smith, who selected from it, and published in his "Eulogium on Franklin" the following specimens:

"Is sound an entity or body?

"How may the phenomena of vapors be explained?

"Is self-interest the rudder that steers mankind, the universal monarch to whom all are tributaries?

"Which is the best form of government, and what was that form which first prevailed among mankind?

"Can any one particular form of government suit all mankind?

"What is the reason that the tides rise higher in the Bay of Fundy than the Bay of Delaware?

"Is the emission of paper money safe?

"What is the reason that men of the greatest knowledge are not the most happy?

"How may the possessions of the Lakes be improved to our advantage?

"Why are tumultuous, uneasy sensations united with our desires?

"Whether it ought to be the aim of philosophy to eradicate the passions?

"How may smoky chimneys be best cured?

"Why does the flame of a candle tend upwards in a spire?

"Which is least criminal—a bad action joined with a good intention, or a good action with a bad intention?

"Is it consistent with the principles of liberty in a free government to punish a man as a libeller when he speaks the truth?"—ED.

jobbs sent in by our other friends now and then put us back. But so determin'd I was to continue doing a sheet a day of the folio, that one night, when, having impos'd my forms, I thought my day's work over, one of them by accident was broken, and two pages reduced to pi, I immediately distributed and compos'd it over again before I went to bed; and this industry, visible to our neighbors, began to give us character and credit; particularly, I was told, that mention being made of the new printing-office at the merchants' Every-night club, the general opinion was that it must fail, there being already two printers in the place, Keimer and Bradford; but Dr. Baird (whom you and I saw many years after at his native place, St. Andrew's in Scotland) gave a contrary opinion: "For the industry of that Franklin," says he, "is superior to any thing I ever saw of the kind; I see him still at work when I go home from club, and he is at work again before his neighbors are out of bed." This struck the rest, and we soon after had offers from one of them to supply us with stationery; but as yet we did not chuse to engage in shop business.

I mention this industry the more particularly and the more freely, tho' it seems to be talking in my own praise, that those of my posterity, who shall read it, may know the use of that virtue, when they see its effects in my favour throughout this relation.

George Webb, who had found a female friend that lent him wherewith to purchase his time of

Keimer, now came to offer himself as a journeyman to us. We could not then imploy him; but I foolishly let him know as a secret that I soon intended to begin a newspaper, and might then have work for him. My hopes of success, as I told him, were founded on this, that the then only newspaper, printed by Bradford, was a paltry thing, wretchedly manag'd, no way entertaining, and yet was profitable to him; I therefore thought a good paper would scarcely fail of good encouragement. I requested Webb not to mention it; but he told it to Keimer, who immediately, to be beforehand with me, published proposals for printing one himself, on which Webb was to be employ'd. I resented this; and, to counteract them, as I could not yet begin our paper, I wrote several pieces of entertainment for Bradford's paper, under the title of the *BUSY BODY*, which Breintnal continu'd some months. By this means the attention of the publick was fixed on that paper, and Keimer's proposals, which we burlesqu'd and ridicul'd, were disregarded. He began his paper, however, and, after carrying it on three quarters of a year, with at most only ninety subscribers, he offer'd it to me for a trifle; and I, having been ready some time to go on with it, took it in hand directly; and it prov'd in a few years extremely profitable to me.\*

---

\* This paper was called *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences and Pennsylvania Gazette*. Keimer printed his last number, the 29th, on the 25th day of September, 1729.

I perceive that I am apt to speak in the singular number, though our partnership still continu'd; the reason may be that, in fact, the whole management

---

Its leading articles were an installment of Chambers' Dictionary, Art. *Air*, a message from Gov. Burnet of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, the reply of the Assembly, and an obituary of the governor, who had just died. The following announcement filled the rest of the sheet:

"PHILADELPHIA, September 23.

"It not quadrating with the circumstances of the printer hereof, S. K., to publish this Gazette any longer, he gives notice that this paper concludes his third quarter; and is the last that will be printed by him. Yet, that his generous subscribers may not be balked or disappointed, he has agreed with B. Franklin and H. Meredith, at the new printing office, to continue it to the end of the year, having transferred the property wholly to them [D. Harry declining it],\* and probably if further encouragement appears it will be continued longer. The said S. K. designs to leave this province early in the spring or sooner, if possibly he can justly accommodate his affairs with every one he stands indebted to."

The next number, 40, appeared on the 2d of October, in new type, with the following announcement, the title "*Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences*" having been dropped, and with it the feature of the paper which it designated:

"The Pennsylvania Gazette being now to be carried on by other hands, the reader may expect some account of the method we design to proceed in.

"Upon a view of Chambers' great dictionaries, from whence were taken the materials of *The Universal Instructor in all Arts and Sciences*, which usually made the first part of this paper, we find that besides their containing many things abstruse or insignificant to us, it will probably be fifty years before the whole can be gone through in this manner of publication. There are likewise in those books continual references from things under one letter of the alphabet to those under another, which relate to the same subject and are necessary to explain and complete it;

\* In the previous number Keimer announced that he had made over his business to David Harry, with the design to leave this province as soon as he could get in his debts and justly balance with every one of his few creditors, etc., etc.

of the business lay upon me. Meredith was no compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober.

---

these taken in their turn may be ten years distant ; and since it is likely that they who desire to acquaint themselves with any particular art or science would gladly have the whole before them in a much less time, we believe our readers will not think such a method of communicating knowledge to be a proper one.

“ However, though we do not intend to continue the publication of those dictionaries in a regular alphabetical method, as has hitherto been done ; yet, as several things exhibited from them in the course of these papers, have been entertaining to such of the curious who never had and cannot have the advantage of good libraries ; and as there are many things still behind, which being in this manner made generally known, may perhaps become of considerable use by giving such hints to the excellent natural genius's of our country, as may contribute either to the improvement of our present manufactures or towards the invention of new ones ; we propose from time to time to communicate such particular parts as appear to be of the most general consequence.

“ As to the Religious Courtship, part of which has been retal'd to the public in these papers, the reader may be informed, that the whole book will probably in a little time be printed and bound by itself ; and those who approve of it will doubtless be better pleased to have it entire, than in this broken, interrupted manner.

“ There are many who have long desired to see a good newspaper in Pennsylvania ; and we hope those gentlemen who are able, will contribute towards the making this such. We ask assistance because we are fully sensible, that to publish a good newspaper is not so easy an undertaking as many people imagine it to be. The author of a Gazette (in the opinion of the learned) ought to be qualified with an extensive acquaintance with languages, a great easiness and command of writing, and relating things clearly and intelligibly and in few words ; he should be able to speak of war both by land and sea ; be well acquainted with geography, with the history of the time, with the secret interests of princes and States, the secrets of courts, and the manners and customs of all nations. Men thus accomplished are very rare in this remote part of the world ; and it would be well if the writer of these papers could make up among his friends what is wanting in himself.

“ Upon the whole, we may assure the publick, that, as far as the encouragement we meet with will enable us, no care and pains shall be

My friends lamented my connection with him, but I was to make the best of it.

Our first papers made a quite different appearance from any before in the province; a better type, and better printed; but some spirited remarks of my writing,\* on the dispute then going on between

---

omitted that may make the *Pennsylvania Gazette* as agreeable and useful an entertainment as the nature of the thing will allow."

After the publication of two numbers the Gazette was published twice a week, beginning with No. 43.—ED.

\* The following are the spirited remarks here referred to:

"His excellency, governor Burnet, died unexpectedly about two days after the date of this reply to his last message; and it was thought the dispute would have ended with him, or at least have lain dormant till the arrival of a new governor from England, who possibly might or might not be inclined to enter too vigorously into the measures of his predecessor. But our last advices by the post acquaint us that his honor the lieutenant-governor (on whom the government immediately devolves upon the death or absence of the commander-in-chief) has vigorously renewed the struggle on his own account, of which the particulars will be seen in our next. Perhaps some of our readers may not fully understand the original ground of this warm contest between the governor and assembly. It seems that people have for these hundred years past, enjoyed the privilege of rewarding the governor for the time being, according to their sense of his merit and services; and few or none of their governors have complained, or had cause to complain, of a scanty allowance. When the late governor Burnet brought with him instructions to demand a settled salary of 1000 pounds sterling per annum, on him and all his successors, and the Assembly were required to fix it immediately; he insisted on it strenuously to the last, and they as constantly refused it. It appears by their votes and proceedings that they thought it an imposition, contrary to their own charter, and to Magna Charta; and they judged that there should be a mutual dependence between the governor and governed; and that to make the governor independent would be dangerous and destructive to their liberties, and the ready way to establish tyranny. They thought likewise, that the province was not the less dependent on the crown of Great Britain, by the governor's depending immediately on them, and his own

Governor Burnet and the Massachusetts Assembly, struck the principal people, occasioned the paper and the manager of it to be much talk'd of, and in a few weeks brought them all to be our subscribers.

Their example was follow'd by many, and our number went on growing continually. This was one of the first good effects of my having learnt a little to scribble ; another was, that the leading men, seeing a newspaper now in the hands of one who

---

good conduct, for an ample support ; because all acts and laws, which he might be induced to pass, must nevertheless be constantly sent home for approbation, in order to continue in force. Many other reasons were given, and arguments used in the course of the controversy, needless to particularize here, because all the material papers relating to it have been already given in our public news.

"Much deserved praise has the deceased governor received for his steady integrity in adhering to his instructions, notwithstanding the great difficulty and opposition he met with, and the strong temptations offered from time to time to induce him to give up the point. And yet, perhaps, something is due to the Assembly (as the love and zeal of that country for the present establishment is too well known to suffer any suspicion of want of loyalty), who continue thus resolutely to abide by what they think their right, and that of the people they represent ; manage all the arts and menaces of a governor, famed for his cunning and politics, backed with instructions from home, and powerfully aided by the great advantage such an officer always has of engaging the principal men of a place in his party, by conferring, when he pleases, so many posts of profit and honor. Their happy mother country will perhaps observe, with pleasure, that though her gallant cocks and matchless dogs abate their natural fire and intrepidity when transported to a foreign clime (as this nation is), yet her sons in the remotest part of the earth, and even to the third and fourth descent, still retain that ardent spirit of liberty, and that undaunted courage, which has in every age so gloriously distinguished Britons and Englishmen from the rest of mankind."—W. T. F.

could also handle a pen, thought it convenient to oblige and encourage me. Bradford still printed the votes, and laws, and other publick business. He had printed an address of the House to the governor, in a coarse, blundering manner; we reprinted it elegantly and correctly, and sent one to every member. They were sensible of the difference: it strengthened the hands of our friends in the House, and they voted us their printers for the year ensuing.

Among my friends in the House I must not forget Mr. Hamilton, before mentioned, who was then returned from England, and had a seat in it. He interested himself for me strongly in that instance, as he did in many others afterward, continuing his patronage till his death.\*

Mr. Vernon, about this time, put me in mind of the debt I ow'd him, but did not press me. I wrote him an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, crav'd his forbearance a little longer, which he allow'd me, and as soon as I was able, I paid the principal with interest, and many thanks; so that erratum was in some degree corrected.

But now another difficulty came upon me which I had never the least reason to expect. Mr. Meredith's father, who was to have paid for our printing-house, according to the expectations given me, was able to advance only one hundred pounds currency,

---

\* I got his son once £500 [marg. note].



which had been paid; and a hundred more was due to the merchant, who grew impatient, and su'd us all. We gave bail, but saw that, if the money could not be rais'd in time, the suit must soon come to a judgment and execution, and our hopeful prospects must, with us, be ruined, as the press and letters must be sold for payment, perhaps at half price.

In this distress two true friends, whose kindness I have never forgotten, nor ever shall forget while I can remember any thing, came to me separately, unknown to each other, and, without any application from me, offering each of them to advance me all the money that should be necessary to enable me to take the whole business upon myself, if that should be practicable; but they did not like my continuing the partnership with Meredith, who, as they said, was often seen drunk in the streets, and playing at low games in alehouses, much to our discredit. These two friends were William Coleman and Robert Grace. I told them I could not propose a separation while any prospect remain'd of the Merediths' fulfilling their part of our agreement, because I thought myself under great obligations to them for what they had done, and would do if they could; but, if they finally fail'd in their performance, and our partnership must be dissolv'd, I should then think myself at liberty to accept the assistance of my friends.

Thus the matter rested for some time, when I said

to my partner, "Perhaps your father is dissatisfied at the part you have undertaken in this affair of ours, and is unwilling to advance for you and me what he would for you alone. If that is the case, tell me, and I will resign the whole to you, and go about my business." "No," said he, "my father has really been disappointed, and is really unable; and I am unwilling to distress him farther. I see this is a business I am not fit for. I was bred a farmer, and it was a folly in me to come to town, and put myself, at thirty years of age, an apprentice to learn a new trade. Many of our Welsh people are going to settle in North Carolina, where land is cheap. I am inclin'd to go with them, and follow my old employment. You may find friends to assist you. If you will take the debts of the company upon you; return to my father the hundred pound he has advanced; pay my little personal debts, and give me thirty pounds and a new saddle, I will relinquish the partnership, and leave the whole in your hands." I agreed to this proposal; it was drawn up in writing, sign'd, and seal'd immediately. I gave him what he demanded, and he went soon after to Carolina, from whence he sent me next year two long letters, containing the best account that had been given of that country, the climate, the soil, husbandry, etc., for in those matters he was very judicious. I printed them in the papers, and they gave great satisfaction to the publick.

As soon as he was gone, I recurr'd to my two

friends; and because I would not give an unkind preference to either, I took half of what each had offered and I wanted of one, and half of the other; paid off the company's debts, and went on with the business in my own name, advertising that the partnership was dissolved. I think this was in or about the year 1729.\*

About this time there was a cry among the people for more paper money, only fifteen thousand pounds being extant in the province, and that soon to be sunk. The wealthy inhabitants oppos'd any addition, being against all paper currency, from an apprehension that it would depreciate, as it had done in New England, to the prejudice of all creditors. We had discuss'd this point in our Junto, where I was on the side of an addition, being persuaded that the first small sum struck in 1723 had done much good by increasing the trade, employment, and number of inhabitants in the province, since I now saw all the old houses inhabited, and many new ones building: whereas I remembered well, that when I first walk'd about the streets of Philadelphia, eating my roll, I saw most of the houses in Walnut-street, between Second and Front streets, with bills on their doors, "To be let;" and many likewise in Chestnut-street and other streets, which made me then think the inhabitants of the city were deserting it one after another.

---

\* By the agreement of dissolution, still extant, it appears that it took place July 14th, 1730.—S.

Our debates possess'd me so fully of the subject, that I wrote and printed an anonymous pamphlet on it, entitled "*The Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency.*" It was well receiv'd by the common people in general; but the rich men dislik'd it, for it increas'd and strengthen'd the clamor for more money, and they happening to have no writers among them that were able to answer it, their opposition slacken'd, and the point was carried by a majority in the House. My friends there, who conceiv'd I had been of some service, thought fit to reward me by employing me in printing the money; a very profitable jobb and a great help to me. This was another advantage gain'd by my being able to write.

The utility of this currency became by time and experience so evident as never afterwards to be much disputed; so that it grew soon to fifty-five thousand pounds, and in 1739 to eighty thousand pounds, since which it arose during war to upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, trade, building, and inhabitants all the while increasing, tho' I now think there are limits beyond which the quantity may be hurtful.

I soon after obtain'd, thro' my friend Hamilton, the printing of the Newcastle paper money, another profitable jobb as I then thought it; small things appearing great to those in small circumstances; and these, to me, were really great advantages, as they were great encouragements. He procured for

me, also, the printing of the laws and votes of that government, which continu'd in my hands as long as I follow'd the business.

I now open'd a little stationer's shop. I had in it blanks of all sorts, the correctest that ever appear'd among us, being assisted in that by my friend Breintnal. I had also paper, parchment, chapmen's books, etc. One Whitemash, a compositor I had known in London, an excellent workman, now came to me, and work'd with me constantly and diligently ; and I took an apprentice, the son of Aquila Rose.

I began now gradually to pay off the debt I was under for the printing-house. In order to secure my credit and character as a tradesman, I took care not only to be in *reality* industrious and frugal, but to avoid all appearances to the contrary, I drest plainly ; I was seen at no places of idle diversion. I never went out a fishing or shooting ; a book, indeed, sometimes debauch'd me from my work, but that was seldom, snug, and gave no scandal ; and, to show that I was not above my business, I sometimes brought home the paper I purchas'd at the stores thro' the streets on a wheelbarrow. Thus being esteem'd an industrious, thriving young man, and paying duly for what I bought, the merchants who imported stationery solicited my custom ; others proposed supplying me with books, and I went on swimmingly. In the mean time, Keimer's credit and business declining daily, he was at last forc'd to sell his printing-house to satisfy his creditors. He

went to Barbadoes, and there lived some years in very poor circumstances.

His apprentice, David Harry, whom I had instructed while I work'd with him, set up in his place at Philadelphia, having bought his materials. I was at first apprehensive of a powerful rival in Harry, as his friends were very able, and had a good deal of interest. I therefore propos'd a partnership to him, which he, fortunately for me, rejected with scorn. He was very proud, dress'd like a gentleman, liv'd expensively, took much diversion and pleasure abroad, ran in debt, and neglected his business; upon which, all business left him; and, finding nothing to do, he follow'd Keimer to Barbadoes, taking the printing-house with him. There this apprentice employ'd his former master as a journeyman; they quarrel'd often; Harry went continually behindhand, and at length was forc'd to sell his types and return to his country work in Pensilvania. The person that bought them employ'd Keimer to use them, but in a few years he died.

There remained now no competitor with me at Philadelphia but the old one, Bradford; who was rich and easy, did a little printing now and then by straggling hands, but was not very anxious about the business. However, as he kept the post-office, it was imagined he had better opportunities of obtaining news; his paper was thought a better distributor of advertisements than mine, and therefore had many more, which was a profitable thing to

him, and a disadvantage to me; for, tho' I did indeed receive and send papers by the post, yet the publick opinion was otherwise, for what I did send was by bribing the riders, who took them privately, Bradford being unkind enough to forbid it, which occasion'd some resentment on my part; and I thought so meanly of him for it, that, when I afterward came into his situation, I took care never to imitate it.

I had hitherto continu'd to board with Godfrey, who lived in part of my house with his wife and children, and had one side of the shop for his glazier's business, tho' he worked little, being always absorbed in his mathematics. Mrs. Godfrey projected a match for me with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensu'd, the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encourag'd me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey manag'd our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing-house, which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been inform'd the printing business was

not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house, and the daughter shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleas'd, I know not; but I suspected the latter, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterward some more favorable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn me on again; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was resented by the Godfreys; we differ'd, and they removed, leaving me the whole house, and I resolved to take no more inmates.

But this affair having turned my thoughts to marriage, I look'd round me and made overtures of acquaintance in other places; but soon found that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, I was not to expect money with a wife, unless with such a one as I should not otherwise think agreeable. In the mean time, that hard-to-be-governed passion of youth hurried me frequently into intrigues with low women that fell in my way, which were attended with some expense and great inconvenience, besides a continual risque to my



health by a distemper which of all things I dreaded, though by great good luck I escaped it. A friendly correspondence as neighbors and old acquaintances had continued between me and Mrs. Read's family, who all had a regard for me from the time of my first lodging in their house. I was often invited there and consulted in their affairs, wherein I sometimes was of service. I piti'd poor Miss Read's unfortunate situation, who was generally dejected, seldom cheerful, and avoided company. I considered my giddiness and inconstancy when in London as in a great degree the cause of her unhappiness, tho' the mother was good enough to think the fault more her own than mine, as she had prevented our marrying before I went thither, and persuaded the other match in my absence. Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England; but this could not easily be prov'd, because of the distance; and, tho' there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, tho' it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be call'd upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavor'd to make each other

happy. Thus I corrected that great *erratum* as well as I could.\*

\* Mrs. Franklin survived her marriage over forty years. She died December 19, 1774. She seems to have been a sensible woman and a devoted wife. Franklin's correspondence abounds with evidence that their union was a happy one, and in a letter to Miss Catharine Ray, afterwards wife of Gov. Green of Rhode Island, who sent him some cheese, he alludes to his wife in a way to reveal the ripened affection which subsisted between them. *Sparks*, vol. vii. p. 92 :

"Mrs. Franklin was very proud that a young lady should have so much regard for her old husband as to send him such a present. We talk of you every time it comes to table. She is sure you are a sensible girl, and a notable housewife, and talks of bequeathing me to you as a legacy ; but I ought to wish you a better, and hope she will live these hundred years ; for we are grown old together, and if she has any faults, I am so used to them that I don't perceive them. As the song says :

"Some faults we have all, and so has my Joan,  
But then they're exceedingly small ;  
And, now I'm grown used to them, so like my own,  
I scarcely can see them at all,  
My dear friends,  
I scarcely can see them at all."

"Indeed I begin to think she has none, as I think of you. And since she is willing I should love you as much as you are willing to be loved by me, let us join in wishing the old lady a long life and a happy."

The author here quotes a stanza from one of his own "Songs," written for the Junto. It has been printed in Professor McVickar's *Life of Dr. Samuel Bard* :

*"My Plain Country Joan ; A Song.*

"Of their Chloes and Phyllises poets may prate,  
I sing my plain country Joan,  
These twelve years my wife, still the joy of my life,  
Blest day that I made her my own.

"Not a word of her face, of her shape, or her air,  
Or of flames or of darts you shall hear ;  
I beauty admire, but virtue I prize,  
That fades not in seventy year.

About this time, our club meeting, not at a tavern, but in a little room of Mr. Grace's, set apart for that purpose, a proposition was made by me, that, since our books were often referr'd to in our disquisitions upon the queries, it might be convenient to us to have them altogether where we met, that upon occasion they might be consulted; and by thus clubbing our books to a common library, we should, while we lik'd to keep them together, have each of us the advantage of using the books of all the other members, which would be nearly as beneficial as if

---

"Am I loaded with care, she takes off a large share;  
That the burden ne'er makes me to reel;  
Does good fortune arrive, the joy of my wife  
Quite doubles the pleasure I feel.

"She defends my good name, even when I'm to blame,  
Firm friend as to man e'er was given;  
Her compassionate breast feels for all the distressed,  
Which draws down more blessings from heaven.

"In health a companion delightful and dear,  
Still easy, engaging, and free;  
In sickness no less than the carefulest nurse,  
As tender as tender can be.

"In peace and good order my household she guides,  
Right careful to save what I gain;  
Yet cheerfully spends, and smiles on the friends  
I've the pleasure to entertain.

"Some faults have we all, and so has my Joan,  
But then they're exceedingly small;  
And, now I'm grown used to them, so like my own,  
I scarcely can see them at all.

"Were the finest young princess, with millions in purse,  
To be had in exchange for my Joan,  
I could not get better wife, might get a worse,  
So I'll stick to my dearest old Joan"—ED.

each owned the whole. It was lik'd and agreed to, and we fill'd one end of the room with such books as we could best spare. The number was not so great as we expected; and tho' they had been of great use, yet some inconveniences occurring for want of due care of them, the collection, after about a year, was separated, and each took his books home again.

And now I set on foot my first project of a public nature, that for a subscription library. I drew up the proposals, got them put into form by our great scrivener, Brockden, and, by the help of my friends in the Junto, procured fifty subscribers of forty shillings each to begin with, and ten shillings a year for fifty years, the term our company was to continue. We afterwards obtain'd a charter, the company being increased to one hundred: this was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges.

*Memo.* Thus far was written with the intention express'd in the beginning and therefore contains several little family anecdotes of no importance to

others. What follows was written many years after in compliance with the advice contain'd in these letters, and accordingly intended for the public. The affairs of the Revolution occasion'd the interruption.

*Letter from Mr. Abel James, with Notes of my  
Life (received in Paris).*

“MY DEAR AND HONORED FRIEND: I have often been desirous of writing to thee, but could not be reconciled to the thought, that the letter might fall into the hands of the British, lest some printer or busy-body should publish some part of the contents, and give our friend pain, and myself censure.

“Some time since there fell into my hands, to my great joy, about twenty-three sheets in thy own handwriting, containing an account of the parentage and life of thyself, directed to thy son, ending in the year 1730, with which there were notes, likewise in thy writing; a copy of which I inclose, in hopes it may be a means, if thou continued it

up to a later period, that the first and latter part may be put together ; and if it is not yet continued, I hope thee will not delay it. Life is uncertain, as the preacher tells us ; and what will the world say if kind, humane, and benevolent Ben. Franklin should leave his friends and the world deprived of so pleasing and profitable a work ; a work which would be useful and entertaining not only to a few, but to millions ? The influence writings under that class have on the minds of youth is very great, and has nowhere appeared to me so plain, as in our public friend's journals. It almost insensibly leads the youth into the resolution of endeavoring to become as good and eminent as the journalist. Should thine, for instance, when published (and I think it could not fail of it), lead the youth to equal the industry and temperance of thy early youth, what a blessing with that class would such a work be ! I know of no character living, nor many of them put together, who has so much in his power as thyself to promote a greater spirit of industry and early attention to business, frugality, and temperance with the American youth. Not that I think the work would have no other merit and use in the world, far from it ; but the first is of such vast importance that I know nothing that can equal it."

The foregoing letter and the minutes accompanying it being shown to a friend, I received from him the following :

*Letter from Mr. Benjamin Vaughan.*

“PARIS, January 31, 1783.

“MY DEAREST SIR : When I had read over your sheets of minutes of the principal incidents of your life, recovered for you by your Quaker acquaintance, I told you I would send you a letter expressing my reasons why I thought it would be useful to complete and publish it as he desired. Various concerns have for some time past prevented this letter being written, and I do not know whether it was worth any expectation ; happening to be at leisure, however, at present, I shall by writing, at least, interest and instruct myself ; but as the terms I am inclined to use may tend to offend a person of your manners, I shall only tell you how I would address any other person, who was as good and as great as yourself, but less diffident. I would say to him, Sir, I solicit the history of your life from the following motives : Your history is so remarkable, that if you do not give it, somebody else will certainly give it ; and perhaps so as nearly to do as much harm, as your own management of the thing might do good. It will moreover present a table of the internal circumstances of your country, which will very much tend to invite to it settlers of virtuous and manly minds. And considering the eagerness with which such information is sought by them, and the extent of your reputation, I do not know of a more efficacious advertisement than your biography would



give. All that has happened to you is also connected with the detail of the manners and situation of a rising people; and in this respect I do not think that the writings of Cæsar and Tacitus can be more interesting to a true judge of human nature and society. But these, sir, are small reasons, in my opinion, compared with the chance which your life will give for the forming of future great men; and in conjunction with your *Art of Virtue* (which you design to publish) of improving the features of private character, and consequently of aiding all happiness, both public and domestic. The two works I allude to, sir, will in particular give a noble rule and example of self-education. School and other education constantly proceed upon false principles, and show a clumsy apparatus pointed at a false mark; but your apparatus is simple, and the mark a true one; and while parents and young persons are left destitute of other just means of estimating and becoming prepared for a reasonable course in life, your discovery that the thing is in many a man's private power, will be invaluable! Influence upon the private character, late in life, is not only an influence late in life, but a weak influence. It is in youth that we plant our chief habits and prejudices; it is in youth that we take our party as to profession, pursuits and matrimony. In youth, therefore, the turn is given; in youth the education even of the next generation is given; in youth the private and public character is determined; and the

term of life extending but from youth to age, life ought to begin well from youth, and more especially before we take our party as to our principal objects. But your biography will not merely teach self-education, but the education of a wise man; and the wisest man will receive lights and improve his progress, by seeing detailed the conduct of another wise man. And why are weaker men to be deprived of such helps, when we see our race has been blundering on in the dark, almost without a guide in this particular, from the farthest trace of time? Show then, sir, how much is to be done, both to sons and fathers; and invite all wise men to become like yourself, and other men to become wise. When we see how cruel statesmen and warriors can be to the human race, and how absurd distinguished men can be to their acquaintance, it will be instructive to observe the instances multiply of pacific, acquiescing manners; and to find how compatible it is to be great and domestic, enviable and yet good-humored.

“The little private incidents which you will also have to relate, will have considerable use, as we want, above all things, rules of prudence in ordinary affairs; and it will be curious to see how you have acted in these. It will be so far a sort of key to life, and explain many things that all men ought to have once explained to them, to give them a chance of becoming wise by foresight. The nearest thing to having experience of one’s own, is to have other

people's affairs brought before us in a shape that is interesting ; this is sure to happen from your pen ; our affairs and management will have an air of simplicity or importance that will not fail to strike ; and I am convinced you have conducted them with as much originality as if you had been conducting discussions in politics or philosophy ; and what more worthy of experiments and system (its importance and its errors considered) than human life ?

“Some men have been virtuous blindly, others have speculated fantastically, and others have been shrewd to bad purposes ; but you, sir, I am sure, will give under your hand, nothing but what is at the same moment, wise, practical and good. Your account of yourself (for I suppose the parallel I am drawing for Dr. Franklin, will hold not only in point of character, but of private history) will show that you are ashamed of no origin ; a thing the more important, as you prove how little necessary all origin is to happiness, virtue, or greatness. As no end likewise happens without a means, so we shall find, sir, that even you yourself framed a plan by which you became considerable ; but at the same time we may see that though the event is flattering, the means are as simple as wisdom could make them ; that is, depending upon nature, virtue, thought and habit. Another thing demonstrated will be the propriety of every man's waiting for his time for appearing upon the stage of the world. Our sensations being very much fixed to the moment, we

are apt to forget that more moments are to follow the first, and consequently that man should arrange his conduct so as to suit the whole of a life. Your attribution appears to have been applied to your life, and the passing moments of it have been enlivened with content and enjoyment, instead of being tormented with foolish impatience or regrets. Such a conduct is easy for those who make virtue and themselves in countenance by examples of other truly great men, of whom patience is so often the characteristic. Your Quaker correspondent, sir (for here again I will suppose the subject of my letter resembling Dr. Franklin), praised your frugality, diligence and temperance, which he considered as a pattern for all youth; but it is singular that he should have forgotten your modesty and your disinterestedness, without which you never could have waited for your advancement, or found your situation in the mean time comfortable; which is a strong lesson to show the poverty of glory and the importance of regulating our minds. If this correspondent had known the nature of your reputation as well as I do, he would have said, Your former writings and measures would secure attention to your Biography, and Art of Virtue; and your Biography and Art of Virtue, in return, would secure attention to them. This is an advantage attendant upon a various character, and which brings all that belongs to it into greater play; and it is the more useful, as perhaps more persons are at a loss for the means of improv-

ing their minds and characters, than they are for the time or the inclination to do it. But there is one concluding reflection, sir, that will shew the use of your life as a mere piece of biography. This style of writing seems a little gone out of vogue, and yet it is a very useful one; and your specimen of it may be particularly serviceable, as it will make a subject of comparison with the lives of various public cut-throats and intriguers, and with absurd monastic self-tormentors or vain literary triflers. If it encourages more writings of the same kind with your own, and induces more men to spend lives fit to be written, it will be worth all Plutarch's *Lives* put together. But being tired of figuring to myself a character of which every feature suits only one man in the world, without giving him the praise of it, I shall end my letter, my dear Dr. Franklin, with a personal application to your proper self. I am earnestly desirous, then, my dear sir, that you should let the world into the traits of your genuine character, as civil broils may otherwise tend to disguise or traduce it. Considering your great age, the caution of your character, and your peculiar style of thinking, it is not likely that any one besides yourself can be sufficiently master of the facts of your life, or the intentions of your mind. Besides all this, the immense revolution of the present period, will necessarily turn our attention towards the author of it, and when virtuous principles have been pretended in it, it will be highly important to

shew that such have really influenced ; and, as your own character will be the principal one to receive a scrutiny, it is proper (even for its effects upon your vast and rising country, as well as upon England and upon Europe) that it should stand respectable and eternal. For the furtherance of human happiness, I have always maintained that it is necessary to prove that man is not even at present a vicious and detestable animal ; and still more to prove that good management may greatly amend him ; and it is for much the same reason, that I am anxious to see the opinion established, that there are fair characters existing among the individuals of the race ; for the moment that all men, without exception, shall be conceived abandoned, good people will cease efforts deemed to be hopeless, and perhaps think of taking their share in the scramble of life, or at least of making it comfortable principally for themselves. Take then, my dear sir, this work most speedily into hand : shew yourself good as you are good ; temperate as you are temperate ; and above all things, prove yourself as one, who from your infancy have loved justice, liberty and concord, in a way that has made it natural and consistent for you to have acted, as we have seen you act in the last seventeen years of your life. Let Englishmen be made not only to respect, but even to love you. When they think well of individuals in your native country, they will go nearer to thinking well of your country ; and when your countrymen see them-

selves well thought of by Englishmen, they will go nearer to thinking well of England. Extend your views even further ; do not stop at those who speak the English tongue, but after having settled so many points in nature and politics, think of bettering the whole race of men. As I have not read any part of the life in question, but know only the character that lived it, I write somewhat at hazard. I am sure, however, that the life and the treatise I allude to (on the Art of Virtue) will necessarily fulfil the chief of my expectations ; and still more so if you take up the measure of suiting these performances to the several views above stated. Should they even prove unsuccessful in all that a sanguine admirer of yours hopes from them, you will at least have framed pieces to interest the human mind ; and whoever gives a feeling of pleasure that is innocent to man, has added so much to the fair side of a life otherwise too much darkened by anxiety and too much injured by pain. In the hope, therefore, that you will listen to the prayer addressed to you in this letter, I beg to subscribe myself, my dearest sir, etc., etc.,

“Signed,

BENJ. VAUGHAN.”

---

*Continuation of the Account of my Life, begun at  
Passy, near Paris, 1784.*

It is some time since I receiv'd the above letters, but I have been too busy till now to think of com-

plying with the request they contain. It might, too, be much better done if I were at home among my papers, which would aid my memory, and help to ascertain dates; but my return being uncertain, and having just now a little leisure, I will endeavor to recollect and write what I can; if I live to get home, it may there be corrected and improv'd.

Not having any copy here of what is already written, I know not whether an account is given of the means I used to establish the Philadelphia public library, which, from a small beginning, is now become so considerable, though I remember to have come down to near the time of that transaction (1730). I will therefore begin here with an account of it, which may be struck out if found to have been already given.

At the time I establish'd myself in Pennsylvania, there was not a good bookseller's shop in any of the colonies to the southward of Boston. In New York and Philad'a the printers were indeed stationers; they sold only paper, etc., almanacs, ballads, and a few common school-books. Those who lov'd reading were oblig'd to send for their books from England; the members of the Junto had each a few. We had left the alehouse, where we first met, and hired a room to hold our club in. I propos'd that we should all of us bring our books to that room, where they would not only be ready to consult in our conferences, but become a common benefit, each of us being at liberty to borrow such as he wish'd



to read at home. This was accordingly done, and for some time contented us.

Finding the advantage of this little collection, I propos'd to render the benefit from books more common, by commencing a public subscription library. I drew a sketch of the plan and rules that would be necessary, and got a skilful conveyancer, Mr. Charles Brockden, to put the whole in form of articles of agreement to be subscribed, by which each subscriber engag'd to pay a certain sum down for the first purchase of books, and an annual contribution for increasing them. So few were the readers at that time in Philadelphia, and the majority of us so poor, that I was not able, with great industry, to find more than fifty persons, mostly young tradesmen, willing to pay down for this purpose forty shillings each, and ten shillings per annum. On this little fund we began. The books were imported; the library was opened one day in the week for lending to the subscribers, on their promissory notes to pay double the value if not duly returned. The institution soon manifested its utility, was imitated by other towns, and in other provinces. The libraries were augmented by donations; reading became fashionable; and our people, having no publick amusements to divert their attention from study, became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observ'd by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries.

When we were about to sign the above-mentioned articles, which were to be binding on us, our heirs, etc., for fifty years, Mr. Brockden, the scrivener, said to us, "You are young men, but it is scarcely probable that any of you will live to see the expiration of the term fix'd in the instrument." A number of us, however, are yet living; but the instrument was after a few years rendered null by a charter that incorporated and gave perpetuity to the company.\*

The objections and reluctances I met with in soliciting the subscriptions, made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project, that might be suppos'd to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project. I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a *number of friends*, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair went on more smoothly, and I ever after practis'd it on such occasions; and, from my frequent successes, can heartily recommend it. The present little sacrifice of your vanity will afterwards be amply repaid. If it remains a while uncertain

---

\* This library was founded in 1731, and incorporated in 1742. By the addition made to it of the library left by Mr. James Logan, and by annual purchases, the Philadelphia Library now numbers between 70,000 and 80,000 volumes.—ED.

to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself will be encouraged to claim it, and then even envy will be disposed to do you justice by plucking those assumed feathers, and restoring them to their right owner.\*

This library afforded me the means of improvement by constant study, for which I set apart an hour or two each day, and thus repair'd in some degree the loss of the learned education my father once intended for me. Reading was the only amusement I allow'd myself. I spent no time in taverns, games, or frolicks of any kind; and my industry in my business continu'd as indefatigable as it was necessary. I was indebted for my printing-house; I had a young family coming on to be educated, and I had to contend with for business two printers, who were established in the place before me. My circumstances, however, grew daily easier. My original habits of frugality continuing, and my father having, among his instructions to me when a boy, frequently repeated a proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling, he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," I from thence considered industry as a means of obtaining wealth and distinction, which encourag'd me, tho' I did not think that I should ever liter-

---

\* This was a wise application of one of the most cynical precepts of Ovid in his banishment: "*Crede mihi, bene qui latuit bene vixit.*" This line was subsequently adopted as his motto by the illustrious author of the Cartesian philosophy.—*Tristia Elegia*, iv. 25.—ED.

ally *stand before kings*, which, however, has since happened; for I have stood before *five*, and even had the honor of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner.

We have an English proverb that says, "*He that would thrive, must ask his wife.*" It was lucky for me that I had one as much dispos'd to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me cheerfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for the paper-makers, etc., etc. We kept no idle servants, our table was plain and simple, our furniture of the cheapest. For instance, my breakfast was a long time bread and milk (no tea), and I ate it out of a twopenny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon. But mark how luxury will enter families, and make a progress, in spite of principle: being call'd one morning to breakfast, I found it in a China bowl, with a spoon of silver! They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three-and-twenty shillings, for which she had no other excuse or apology to make, but that she thought *her* husband deserv'd a silver spoon and China bowl as well as any of his neighbors. This was the first appearance of plate and China in our house, which afterward, in a course of years, as our wealth increas'd, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value.

I had been religiously educated as a Presbyterian; and tho' some of the dogmas of that persua-

sion, such as *the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation, etc.*, appeared to me unintelligible, others doubtful, and I early absented myself from the public assemblies of the sect, Sunday being my studying day, I never was without some religious principles. I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteem'd the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which, without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another. This respect to all, with an opinion that the worst had some good effects, induc'd me to avoid all discourse that might tend to lessen the good opinion another might have of his own religion; and as our province increas'd in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and generally erected by voluntary contribution, my mite for such purpose, whatever might be the sect, was never refused.

Tho' I seldom attended any public worship, I had still an opinion of its propriety, and of its utility when rightly conducted, and I regularly paid my

K\*

annual subscription for the support of the only Presbyterian minister or meeting we had in Philadelphia. He us'd to visit me sometimes as a friend, and admonish me to attend his administrations, and I was now and then prevail'd on to do so, once for five Sundays successively. Had he been in my opinion a good preacher, perhaps I might have continued, notwithstanding the occasion I had for the Sunday's leisure in my course of study; but his discourses were chiefly either polemic arguments, or explications of the peculiar doctrines of our sect, and were all to me very dry, uninteresting, and unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforc'd, their aim seeming to be rather to make us Presbyterians than good citizens.

At length he took for his text that verse of the fourth chapter of Philippians, "*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things.*" And I imagin'd, in a sermon on such a text, we could not miss of having some morality. But he confin'd himself to five points only, as meant by the apostle, viz. : 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the publick worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers. These might be all good things; but, as they were not the kind of good things that I expected from that text, I despaired of ever

meeting with them from any other, was disgusted, and attended his preaching no more. I had some years before compos'd a little Liturgy, or form of prayer, for my own private use (viz., in 1728), entitled, *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*. I return'd to the use of this, and went no more to the public assemblies. My conduct might be blameable, but I leave it, without attempting further to excuse it; my present purpose being to relate facts, and not to make apologies for them.\*

It was about this time I conceiv'd the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection. I wish'd to live without committing any fault at any time; I would conquer all that either natural inclination, custom, or company might lead me into. As I knew, or thought I knew, what was right and wrong, I did not see why I might not always do the one and avoid the other. But I soon found I had

---

\* Giving some advice to his daughter Sarah, in a letter written on the eve of his departure for England in 1764, the Doctor refers more at length to the subject of church ministration. He writes:

"Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the common prayer-book is your principal business there, and, if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart than sermons generally can do. For they were composed by men of much greater piety and wisdom than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish you would never miss the prayer days; yet I do not mean you should despise sermons even of the preachers you dislike, for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth. I am the more particular on this head as you seemed to express a little before I came away, some inclination to leave our church, which I would not have you do."—ED.

undertaken a task of more difficulty than I had imagined. While my care was employ'd in guarding against one fault, I was often surprised by another; habit took the advantage of inattention; inclination was sometimes too strong for reason. I concluded, at length, that the mere speculative conviction that it was our interest to be completely virtuous, was not sufficient to prevent our slipping; and that the contrary habits must be broken, and good ones acquired and established, before we can have any dependence on a steady, uniform rectitude of conduct. For this purpose I therefore contrived the following method.

In the various enumerations of the moral virtues I had met with in my reading, I found the catalogue more or less numerous, as different writers included more or fewer ideas under the same name. Temperance, for example, was by some confined to eating and drinking, while by others it was extended to mean the moderating every other pleasure, appetite, inclination, or passion, bodily or mental, even to our avarice and ambition. I propos'd to myself, for the sake of clearness, to use rather more names, with fewer ideas annex'd to each, than a few names with more ideas; and I included under thirteen names of virtues all that at that time occur'd to me as necessary or desirable, and annexed to each a short precept, which fully express'd the extent I gave to its meaning.

These names of virtues, with their precepts were :



## 1. TEMPERANCE.

Eat not to dullness ; drink not to elevation.

## 2. SILENCE.

Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself ; avoid trifling conversation.

## 3. ORDER.

Let all your things have their places ; let each part of your business have its time.

## 4. RESOLUTION.

Resolve to perform what you ought ; perform without fail what you resolve.

## 5. FRUGALITY.

Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself ; *i. e.*, waste nothing.

## 6. INDUSTRY.

Lose no time ; be always employ'd in something useful ; cut off all unnecessary actions.

## 7. SINCERITY.

Use no hurtful deceit ; think innocently and justly • and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

## 8. JUSTICE.

Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

## 9. MODERATION.

Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

## 10. CLEANLINESS.

Tolerate no uncleanness in body, cloaths, or habitation.

## 11. TRANQUILLITY.

Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

## 12. CHASTITY.

Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

## 13. HUMILITY.

Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

My intention being to acquire the *habitude* of all these virtues, I judg'd it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone thro' the thirteen; and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arrang'd them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard main-

tained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquir'd and establish'd, Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improv'd in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtain'd rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave *Silence* the second place. This and the next, *Order*, I expected would allow me more time for attending to my project and my studies. *Resolution*, once become habitual, would keep me firm in my endeavors to obtain all the subsequent virtues; *Frugality* and *Industry* freeing me from my remaining debt, and producing affluence and independence, would make more easy the practice of *Sincerity* and *Justice*, etc., etc. Conceiving then, that, agreeably to the advice of Pythagoras in his Golden Verses,\* daily exami-

---

\* The verses here referred to are thus given as Englished from the version of Hierocles :

"In this place you should collect together the sense of all the foregoing precepts, that so giving heed to them as to the laws of God in the inward judicature of the soul, you may make a just examination of what you have done well or ill. For how will our remembrance reprehend us for doing ill, or praise us for doing well, unless the preceding meditation receive some laws, according to which the whole tenor of our life should be ordered, and to which we should conform the very private recesses of conscience all our lives long? He requires also that this examination be daily repeated, that by continual returns of recollection we may not be deceived in our judgment. The time which he recommends for this work is about even or bed-time, that we may conclude the action of the day

nation would be necessary, I contrived the following method for conducting that examination.

---

with the judgment of conscience, making the examination of our conversation an evening song to God. Wherein have I transgressed? What have I done? What duty have I omitted? So shall we measure our lives by the rules above mentioned, if to the law of the mind we join the judgment of reason.

“What then does the law of the mind say? That we should honor the more excellent natures according to their essential order, that we should have our parents and relations in high esteem, love and embrace good men, raise ourselves above corporeal affections, everywhere stand in awe of ourselves, carefully observe justice, consider the frailty of riches and momentary life, embrace the lot which falls to us by divine judgment, delight in a divine frame of spirit, convert our mind to what is most excellent, love good discourses, not lie open to impostures, not be servilely affected in the possession of virtue, advise before action to prevent repentance, free ourselves from uncertain opinions, live with knowledge, and lastly, that we should adapt our bodies and the things without to the exercise of virtue. These are the things which the law-giving mind has implanted in the souls of men, which when reason admits, it becomes a most vigilant judge of itself, in this manner, Wherein have I transgressed? what have I done? and if afterwards she finds herself to have spent the whole day agreeably to the foregoing rules, she is rewarded with a divine complacency. And if she find anything done amiss, she corrects herself by the restorative of an after admonition.

“Wherefore he would have us keep off sleep by the readiness and alacrity of reason. And this the body will easily endure, if temperately dieted it has not contracted a necessity of sleeping. By which means even our most natural appetites are subjected to the empire of reason.

“Do not admit sleep (says he) till you have examin’d every action of the day. And what is the form of examination? Wherein have I transgress’d? what have I done? what duty have I omitted? For we sin two ways. By doing what we should not, and by not doing what we should. For ’tis one thing not to do well, and another thing to commit evil. One is a sin of omission, and the other of commission.

“For instance, ’tis our duty to pray, but not to blaspheme; to nourish our parents but not to revile them. He that does the former of these does what he ought, he that does the latter what he ought not. Though there is as much guilt in a sin of omission as in a sin of commission.

“He exhorts also that we proceed methodically in our examination

I made a little book, in which I allotted a page for each of the virtues. I rul'd each page with red ink, so as to have seven columns, one for each day of the week, marking each column with a letter for the day. I cross'd these columns with thirteen red lines, marking the beginning of each line with the first letter of one of the virtues, on which line, and in its proper column, I might mark, by a little black spot, every fault I found upon examination to have been committed respecting that virtue upon that day.\*

---

from the beginning to the end, leaving nothing out in the middle, which is implied by the word, runover. For oftentimes change of order deceives the judgment, and makes us favorable to our ill actions through disorder of memory. Besides, a daily recollection of our actions begets care and studiousness of conversation, and a sense of our immortality. And this is worth our admiration, that when he bid us recollect everything, yet he added not, Wherein have I done well? or what duty have I perform'd? But he turn'd the memory to what was a less occasion of pride, requiring a scrutiny only of our sins. And as for the judge, he has constituted that which is most just and impartial, and most intimate and domestick, the conscience, right reason, or a man's self, which he had before caution'd us to stand in awe of above all things. For who can so admonish another as every man can himself? For he that is at his own liberty will use the freedom of nature, and shake off the admonitions of others, when he is not minded to follow them. But reason, which is within us, cannot chuse but hear itself. God has set this over us as a guardian, instructor and schoolmaster. And this the verse makes the judge of the day's action, acquiesces in its determination whether it condemns or approves itself. For when it reads over what is done in the register of memory, then, looking to the exemplar of the law, it pronounces itself worthy of honor or dishonor. This course, if daily follow'd, perfects the divine image in them that use it, leading them by additions and subtractions to the beauty of virtue, and all attainable perfection. For here end the instructions about civil virtue."—ED.

\* This "little book" is dated 1st of July, 1733.—W. T. F.

*Form of the pages.*

TEMPERANCE.							
EAT NOT TO DULNESS; DRINK NOT TO ELEVATION.							
	S.	M.	T.	W.	T.	F.	S.
T.							
S.	*	*		*		*	
O.	**	*	*		*	*	*
R.			*			*	
F.		*			*		
L.			*				
S.							
J.							
M.							
C.							
T.							
C.							
H.							

I determined to give a week's strict attention to each of the virtues successively. Thus, in the first week, my great guard was to avoid every the least offence against *Temperance*, leaving the other virtues to their ordinary chance, only marking every evening the faults of the day. Thus, if in the first week I could keep my first line, marked T, clear of spots, I suppos'd the habit of that virtue so much strengthen'd, and its opposite weaken'd, that I might venture extending my attention to include the next, and for the following week keep both lines clear of spots. Proceeding thus to the last, I could go thro' a course compleat in thirteen weeks, and four

courses in a year. And like him who, having a garden to weed, does not attempt to eradicate all the bad herbs at once, which would exceed his reach and his strength, but works on one of the beds at a time, and, having accomplish'd the first, proceeds to a second, so I should have, I hoped, the encouraging pleasure of seeing on my pages the progress I made in virtue, by clearing successively my lines of their spots, till in the end, by a number of courses, I should be happy in viewing a clean book, after a thirteen weeks' daily examination.

This my little book had for its motto these lines from Addison's *Cato*:

"Here will I hold. If there's a power above us  
(And that there is, all nature cries aloud  
Thro' all her works), He must delight in virtue;  
And that which he delights in must be happy."

Another from Cicero,

"O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutum indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum! Unus dies, bene et ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati est antependendus."

Another from the Proverbs of Solomon, speaking of wisdom or virtue:

"Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." iii. 16, 17.

And conceiving God to be the fountain of wisdom, I thought it right and necessary to solicit his assistance for obtaining it; to this end I formed the

following little prayer, which was prefix'd to my tables of examination, for daily use.

*"O powerful Goodness! bountiful Father! merciful Guide! Increase in me that wisdom which discovers my truest interest. Strengthen my resolutions to perform what that wisdom dictates. Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favours to me."*

I used also sometimes a little prayer which I took from Thomson's Poems, viz. :

"Father of light and life, thou Good Supreme!  
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!  
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,  
From every low pursuit; and fill my soul  
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;  
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!"

The precept of *Order* requiring that *every part of my business should have its allotted time*, one page in my little book contain'd the following scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day.

THE MORNING.		
Question. What good shall I do this day?	5	Rise, wash, and address <i>Pow-</i>
	6	<i>erful Goodness!</i> Contrive day's
	7	business, and take the resolution
		of the day; prosecute the pre-
		sent study, and breakfast.
	8	
	9	
	10	Work.
	11	
NOON.	12	Read, or overlook my ac-
	1	counts, and dine.
	2	
	3	Work.
	4	
	5	



EVENING.		
<i>Question.</i> What good have I done to-day?	{ 6	Put things in their places.
	{ 7	Supper. Music or diversion,
	{ 8	or conversation. Examination
	{ 9	of the day.
	{ 10	
	{ 11	
	{ 12	
NIGHT.		
	{ 1	Sleep.
	{ 2	
	{ 3	
	{ 4	

I enter'd upon the execution of this plan for self-examination, and continu'd it with occasional intermissions for some time. I was surpris'd to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagin'd; but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish. To avoid the trouble of renewing now and then my little book, which, by scraping out the marks on the paper of old faults to make room for new ones in a new course, became full of holes, I transferr'd my tables and precepts to the ivory leaves of a memorandum book, on which the lines were drawn with red ink, that made a durable stain, and on those lines I mark'd my faults with a black-lead pencil, which marks I could easily wipe out with a wet sponge. After a while I went thro' one course only in a year, and afterward only one in several years, till at length I omitted them entirely, being employ'd in voyages and business abroad, with a multiplicity of affairs that interfered; but I always carried my little book with me.

My scheme of ORDER gave me the most trouble;

and I found that, tho' it might be practicable where a man's business was such as to leave him the disposition of his time, that of a journeyman printer, for instance, it was not possible to be exactly observed by a master, who must mix with the world, and often receive people of business at their own hours. *Order*, too, with regard to places for things, papers, etc., I found extreamly difficult to acquire. I had not been early accustomed to it, and, having an exceeding good memory, I was not so sensible of the inconvenience attending want of method. This article, therefore, cost me so much painful attention, and my faults in it vexed me so much, and I made so little progress in amendment, and had such frequent relapses, that I was almost ready to give up the attempt, and content myself with a faulty character in that respect, like the man who, in buying an ax of a smith, my neighbour, desired to have the whole of its surface as bright as the edge. The smith consented to grind it bright for him if he would turn the wheel; he turn'd, while the smith press'd the broad face of the ax hard and heavily on the stone, which made the turning of it very fatiguing. The man came every now and then from the wheel to see how the work went on, and at length would take his ax as it was, without farther grinding. "No," said the smith, "turn on, turn on; we shall have it bright by-and by; as yet, it is only speckled." "Yes," says the man, "*but I*

*think I like a speckled ax best."* And I believe this may have been the case with many, who, having, for want of some such means as I employ'd, found the difficulty of obtaining good and breaking bad habits in other points of vice and virtue, have given up the struggle, and concluded that "*a speckled ax was best,*" for something, that pretended to be reason, was every now and then suggesting to me that such extream nicety as I exacted of myself might be a kind of foppery in morals, which, if it were known, would make me ridiculous; that a perfect character might be attended with the inconvenience of being envied and hated; and that a benevolent man should allow a few faults in himself, to keep his friends in countenance.

In truth, I found myself incorrigible with respect to Order; and now I am grown old, and my memory bad, I feel very sensibly the want of it. But, on the whole, tho' I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, tho' they never reach the wish'd-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavor, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible.

It may be well my posterity should be informed that to this little artifice, with the blessing of God, their ancestor ow'd the constant felicity of his life,

In this piece it was my design to explain and enforce this doctrine, that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden, but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered; that it was, therefore, every one's interest to be virtuous who wish'd to be happy even in this world; and I should, from this circumstance (there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavored to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity.

My list of virtues contain'd at first but twelve; but a Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride show'd itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinc'd me by mentioning several instances; I determin'd endeavouring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly among the rest, and I added *Humility* to my list, giving an extensive meaning to the word.

I cannot boast of much success in acquiring the *reality* of this virtue, but I had a good deal with regard to the *appearance* of it. I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction to the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own. I even

forbid myself, agreeably to the old laws of our Junto, the use of every word or expression in the language that imported a fix'd opinion, such as *certainly*, *undoubtedly*, etc., and I adopted, instead of them, *I conceive*, *I apprehend*, or *I imagine* a thing to be so or so; or it *so appears to me at present*. When another asserted something that I thought an error, I deny'd myself the pleasure of contradicting him abruptly, and of showing immediately some absurdity in his proposition; and in answering I began by observing that in certain cases or circumstances his opinion would be right, but in the present case there *appear'd* or *seem'd* to me some difference, etc. I soon found the advantage of this change in my manner; the conversations I engag'd in went on more pleasantly. The modest way in which I propos'd my opinions procur'd them a readier reception and less contradiction; I had less mortification when I was found to be in the wrong, and I more easily prevail'd with others to give up their mistakes and join with me when I happened to be in the right.

And this mode, which I at first put on with some violence to natural inclination, became at length so easy, and so habitual to me, that perhaps for these fifty years past no one has ever heard a dogmatical expression escape me. And to this habit (after my character of integrity) I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow-citizens when I proposed new institutions, or altera-

tions in the old, and so much influence in public councils when I became a member ; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points.

In reality, there is, perhaps, no one of our natural passions so hard to subdue as *pride*. Disguise it, struggle with it, beat it down, stifle it, mortify it as much as one pleases, it is still alive, and will every now and then peep out and show itself ; you will see it, perhaps, often in this history ; for, even if I could conceive that I had compleatly overcome it, I should probably be proud of my humility.

[Thus far written at Passy, 1784.]

[“*I am now about to write at home, August, 1788, but can not have the help expected from my papers, many of them being lost in the war. I have, however, found the following.*”]\*

HAVING mentioned a *great and extensive project* which I had conceiv'd, it seems proper that some account should be here given of that project and its object. Its first rise in my mind appears in the following little paper, accidentally preserv'd, viz. :

*Observations on my reading history, in Library, May 19th, 1731.*

“That the great affairs of the world, the wars, revolutions, etc., are carried on and effected by parties.

---

\* This is a marginal memorandum.—ED.

“That the view of these parties is their present general interest, or what they take to be such.

“That the different views of these different parties occasion all confusion.

“That while a party is carrying on a general design, each man has his particular private interest in view.

“That as soon as a party has gain'd its general point, each member becomes intent upon his particular interest; which, thwarting others, breaks that party into divisions, and occasions more confusion.

“That few in public affairs act from a meer view of the good of their country, whatever they may pretend; and, tho' their actings bring real good to their country, yet men primarily considered that their own and their country's interest was united, and did not act from a principle of benevolence.

“That fewer still, in public affairs, act with a view to the good of mankind.

“There seems to me at present to be great occasion for raising a United Party for Virtue, by forming the virtuous and good men of all nations into a regular body, to be govern'd by suitable good and wise rules, which good and wise men may probably be more unanimous in their obedience to, than common people are to common laws.

“I at present think that whoever attempts this aright, and is well qualified, can not fail of pleasing God, and of meeting with success. B. F.”



Revolving this project in my mind, as to be undertaken hereafter, when my circumstances should afford me the necessary leisure, I put down from time to time, on pieces of paper, such thoughts as occur'd to me respecting it. Most of these are lost; but I find one purporting to be the substance of an intended creed, containing, as I thought, the essentials of every known religion, and being free of every thing that might shock the professors of any religion. It is express'd in these words, viz. :

“ That there is one God, who made all things.

“ That he governs the world by his providence.

“ That he ought to be worshiped by adoration, prayer, and thanksgiving.

“ But that the most acceptable service of God is doing good to man.

“ That the soul is immortal.

“ And that God will certainly reward virtue and punish vice, either here or hereafter.”\*

My ideas at that time were, that the sect should be begun and spread at first among young and single men only; that each person to be initiated should not only declare his assent to such creed, but should have exercised himself with the thirteen weeks' examination and practice of the virtues, as in the before-mention'd model; that the existence of such a society should be kept a secret, till it was become

---

\* In the Middle Ages, Franklin, if such a phenomenon as Franklin were possible in the Middle Ages, would probably have been the founder of a monastic order.—ED.

considerable, to prevent solicitations for the admission of improper persons, but that the members should each of them search among his acquaintance for ingenuous, well-disposed youths, to whom, with prudent caution, the scheme should be gradually communicated; that the members should engage to afford their advice, assistance, and support to each other in promoting one another's interests, business, and advancement in life; that, for distinction, we should be call'd *The Society of the Free and Easy*: free, as being, by the general practice and habit of the virtues, free from the dominion of vice; and particularly by the practice of industry and frugality, free from debt, which exposes a man to confinement, and a species of slavery to his creditors.

This is as much as I can now recollect of the project, except that I communicated it in part to two young men, who adopted it with some enthusiasm; but my then narrow circumstances, and the necessity I was under of sticking close to my business, occasion'd my postponing the further prosecution of it at that time; and my multifarious occupations, public and private, induc'd me to continue postponing, so that it has been omitted till I have no longer strength or activity left sufficient for such an enterprise; tho' I am still of opinion that it was a practicable scheme, and might have been very useful, by forming a great number of good citizens; and I was not discourag'd by the seeming magnitude of the undertaking, as I have always thought that one

man of tolerable abilities may work great changes, and accomplish great affairs among mankind, if he first forms a good plan, and, cutting off all amusements or other employments that would divert his attention, makes the execution of that same plan his sole study and business.

In 1732 I first publish'd my Almanack, under the name of *Richard Saunders*; it was continu'd by me about twenty-five years, commonly call'd *Poor Richard's Almanac*. I endeavor'd to make it both entertaining and useful, and it accordingly came to be in such demand, that I reap'd considerable profit from it, vending annually near ten thousand.\* And observing that it was generally read, scarce any

\* The advertisement to the first number of this the most celebrated of Almanacs was printed in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on the 19th of December, 1732. Though appearing thus late in the season, three editions of No. 1 were sold before the end of January. The advertisement ran as follows :

"Just published, for 1733, An Almanack, containing the Lunations, Eclipses, Planets' Motions and Aspects, Weather, Sun and Moon's Rising and Setting, High Water, etc. ; besides many pleasant and witty Verses, Jests, and Sayings ; Author's Motive of Writing ; Prediction of the Death of his Friend, Mr. Titan Leeds ; Moon no Cukold ; Bachelor's Folly ; Parson's Wine and Baker's Pudding ; Short Visits ; Kings and Bears ; New Fashions ; Game for Kisses ; Katherine's Love ; Different Sentiments ; Signs of a Tempest ; Death of a Fisherman ; Conjugal Debate ; Men and Melons ; The Prodigal ; Breakfast in Bed ; Oyster Law-suit, etc. By Richard Saunders, Philomat. Printed and Sold by B. Franklin."

I believe there is no complete collection of this Almanac in existence. The most complete one that I have any knowledge of was made by Mr. Doggett, for some years the publisher of a New York Directory. At his death, however, the collection was dispersed.—Ed.

neighborhood in the province being without it, I consider'd it as a proper vehicle for conveying instruction among the common people, who bought scarcely any other books; I therefore filled all the little spaces that occur'd between the remarkable days in the calendar with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality, as the means of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want, to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*

These proverbs, which contained the wisdom of many ages and nations, I assembled and form'd into a connected discourse prefix'd to the Almanack of 1757, as the harangue of a wise old man to the people attending an auction. The bringing all these scatter'd counsels thus into a focus enabled them to make greater impression. The piece, being universally approved, was copied in all the newspapers of the Continent; reprinted in Britain on a broad side, to be stuck up in houses; two translations were made of it in French, and great numbers bought by the clergy and gentry, to distribute gratis among their poor parishioners and tenants. In Pennsylvania, as it discouraged useless expense in foreign superfluities, some thought it had its share of influence in producing that growing plenty of money which was observable for several years after its publication.

I considered my newspaper, also, as another means of communicating instruction, and in that view frequently reprinted in it extracts from the *Spectator*, and other moral writers; and sometimes publish'd little pieces of my own, which had been first compos'd for reading in our *Junto*. Of these are a Socratic dialogue, tending to prove that, whatever might be his parts and abilities, a vicious man could not properly be called a man of sense; and a discourse on self-denial, showing that virtue was not secure till its practice became a habitude, and was free from the opposition of contrary inclinations. These may be found in the papers about the beginning of 1735.

In the conduct of my newspaper, I carefully excluded all libelling and personal abuse, which is of late years become so disgraceful to our country. Whenever I was solicited to insert any thing of that kind, and the writers pleaded, as they generally did, the liberty of the press, and that a newspaper was like a stage-coach, in which any one who would pay had a right to a place, my answer was, that I would print the piece separately if desired, and the author might have as many copies as he pleased to distribute himself, but that I would not take upon me to spread his detraction; and that, having contracted with my subscribers to furnish them with what might be either useful or entertaining, I could not fill their papers with private altercation, in which they had no concern, without doing them manifest injustice.

Now, many of our printers make no scruple of gratifying the malice of individuals by false accusations of the fairest characters among ourselves, augmenting animosity even to the producing of duels; and are, moreover, so indiscreet as to print scurrilous reflections on the government of neighboring states, and even on the conduct of our best national allies, which may be attended with the most pernicious consequences. These things I mention as a caution to young printers, and that they may be encouraged not to pollute their presses and disgrace their profession by such infamous practices, but refuse steadily, as they may see by my example that such a course of conduct will not, on the whole, be injurious to their interests.

In 1733 I sent one of my journeymen to Charleston, South Carolina, where a printer was wanting. I furnish'd him with a press and letters, on an agreement of partnership, by which I was to receive one-third of the profits of the business, paying one-third of the expense. He was a man of learning, and honest but ignorant in matters of account; and, tho' he sometimes made me remittances, I could get no account from him, nor any satisfactory state of our partnership while he lived. On his decease, the business was continued by his widow, who, being born and bred in Holland, where, as I have been inform'd, the knowledge of accounts makes a part of female education, she not only sent me as clear a state as she could find of the transactions past, but

continued to account with the greatest regularity and exactness every quarter afterwards, and managed the business with such success, that she not only brought up reputably a family of children, but, at the expiration of the term, was able to purchase of me the printing-house, and establish her son in it.

I mention this affair chiefly for the sake of recommending that branch of education for our young females, as likely to be of more use to them and their children, in case of widowhood, than either music or dancing, by preserving them from losses by imposition of crafty men, and enabling them to continue, perhaps, a profitable mercantile house, with establish'd correspondence, till a son is grown up fit to undertake and go on with it, to the lasting advantage and enriching of the family.

About the year 1734 there arrived among us from Ireland a young Presbyterian preacher, named Hemphill, who delivered with a good voice, and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses, which drew together considerable numbers of different persuasions, who join'd in admiring them. Among the rest, I became one of his constant hearers, his sermons pleasing me, as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the practice of virtue, or what in the religious stile are called good works. Those, however, of our congregation, who considered themselves as orthodox Presbyterians, disapprov'd his doctrine, and were join'd by most of the old clergy, who arraign'd

him of heterodoxy before the synod, in order to have him silenc'd. I became his zealous partisan, and contributed all I could to raise a party in his favour, and we combated for him a while with some hopes of success. There was much scribbling pro and con upon the occasion; and finding that, tho' an elegant preacher, he was but a poor writer, I lent him my pen and wrote for him two or three pamphlets, and one piece in the Gazette of April, 1735. Those pamphlets, as is generally the case with controversial writings, tho' eagerly read at the time, were soon out of vogue, and I question whether a single copy of them now exists.

During the contest an unlucky occurrence hurt his cause exceedingly. One of our adversaries having heard him preach a sermon that was much admired, thought he had somewhere read the sermon before, or at least a part of it. On search, he found that part quoted at length, in one of the British Reviews, from a discourse of Dr. Foster's. This detection gave many of our party disgust, who accordingly abandoned his cause, and occasion'd our more speedy discomfiture in the synod. I stuck by him, however, as I rather approv'd his giving us good sermons compos'd by others, than bad ones of his own manufacture, tho' the latter was the practice of our common teachers. He afterward acknowledg'd to me that none of those he preach'd were his own; adding, that his memory was such as enabled him to retain and repeat any sermon after one read-



ing only. On our defeat, he left us in search elsewhere of better fortune, and I quitted the congregation, never joining it after, tho' I continu'd many years my subscription for the support of its ministers.

I had begun in 1733 to study languages; I soon made myself so much a master of the French as to be able to read the books with ease. I then undertook the Italian. An acquaintance, who was also learning it, us'd often to tempt me to play chess with him. Finding this took up too much of the time I had to spare for study, I at length refus'd to play any more, unless on this condition, that the victor in every game should have a right to impose a task, either in parts of the grammar to be got by heart, or in translations, etc., which tasks the vanquish'd was to perform upon honour, before our next meeting. As we play'd pretty equally, we thus beat one another into that language. I afterwards with a little painstaking, acquir'd as much of the Spanish as to read their books also.

I have already mention'd that I had only one year's instruction in a Latin school, and that when very young, after which I neglected that language entirely. But, when I had attained an acquaintance with the French, Italian, and Spanish, I was surpriz'd to find, on looking over a Latin Testament, that I understood so much more of that language than I had imagined, which encouraged me to apply myself again to the study of it, and I met with more

success, as those preceding languages had greatly smooth'd my way.

From these circumstances, I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and, having acquir'd that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages which are deriv'd from it; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that, if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending; but certainly, if you begin with the lowest you will with more ease ascend to the top; and I would therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether, since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learnt becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian, etc.; for, tho', after spending the same time, they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two, that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life.\*

---

\* It may be doubted whether any thing more wise than this has been written upon the much-vexed question to which it relates. The au-

After ten years' absence from Boston, and having become easy in my circumstances, I made a journey thither to visit my relations, which I could not sooner well afford. In returning, I call'd at Newport to see my brother, then settled there with his printing-house. Our former differences were forgotten, and our meeting was very cordial and affectionate. He was fast declining in his health, and requested of me that, in case of his death, which he apprehended not far distant, I would take home his son, then but

---

thority of Franklin, the most eminently practical man of his age, in favor of reserving the study of the dead languages until the mind has reached a certain maturity, is confirmed by the confession of one of the most eminent scholars of any age.

"Our seminaries of learning," says Gibbon, "do not exactly correspond with the precept of a Spartan king, 'that the child should be instructed in the arts which will be useful to the man;' since a finished scholar may emerge from the head of Westminster or Eton, in total ignorance of the business and conversation of English gentlemen in the latter end of the eighteenth century. But these schools may assume the merit of teaching all that they pretend to teach, the Latin and Greek languages: they deposit in the hands of a disciple the keys of two valuable chests; nor can he complain, if they are afterwards lost or neglected by his own fault. The necessity of leading in equal ranks so many unequal powers of capacity and application, will prolong to eight or ten years the juvenile studies, which might be despatched in half that time by the skilful master of a single pupil. Yet even the repetition of exercise and discipline contributes to fix in a vacant mind the verbal science of grammar and prosody: and the private or voluntary student, who possesses the sense and spirit of the classics, may offend, by a false quantity, the scrupulous ear of a well-flogged critic. For myself, I must be content with a very small share of the civil and literary fruits of a public school. In the space of two years (1749, 1750), interrupted by danger and debility, I painfully climbed into the third form; and my riper age was left to acquire the beauties of the Latin and the rudiments of the Greek tongue."—ED.

ten years of age, and bring him up to the printing business. This I accordingly perform'd, sending him a few years to school before I took him into the office. His mother carried on the business till he was grown up, when I assisted him with an assortment of new types, those of his father being in a manner worn out. Thus it was that I made my brother ample amends for the service I had depriv'd him of by leaving him so early.

In 1736 I lost one of my sons, a fine boy of four years old, by the small-pox, taken in the common way. I long regretted bitterly, and still regret that I had not given it to him by inoculation. This I mention for the sake of parents who omit that operation, on the supposition that they should never forgive themselves if a child died under it; my example showing that the regret may be the same either way, and that, therefore, the safer should be chosen.

Our club, the Junto, was found so useful, and afforded such satisfaction to the members, that several were desirous of introducing their friends, which could not well be done without exceeding what we had settled as a convenient number, viz., twelve. We had from the beginning made it a rule to keep our institution a secret, which was pretty well observ'd; the intention was to avoid applications of improper persons for admittance, some of whom, perhaps, we might find it difficult to refuse. I was one of those who were against any addition

to our number, but, instead of it, made in writing a proposal, that every member separately should endeavor to form a subordinate club, with the same rules respecting queries, etc., and without informing them of the connection with the Junto. The advantages proposed were, the improvement of so many more young citizens by the use of our institutions; our better acquaintance with the general sentiments of the inhabitants on any occasion, as the Junto member might propose what queries we should desire, and was to report to the Junto what pass'd in his separate club; the promotion of our particular interests in business by more extensive recommendation, and the increase of our influence in public affairs, and our power of doing good by spreading thro' the several clubs the sentiments of the Junto.

The project was approv'd, and every member undertook to form his club, but they did not all succeed. Five or six only were compleated, which were called by different names, as the Vine, the Union, the Band, etc. They were useful to themselves, and afforded us a good deal of amusement, information, and instruction, besides answering, in some considerable degree, our views of influencing the public opinion on particular occasions, of which I shall give some instances in course of time as they happened.

My first promotion was my being chosen, in 1736, clerk of the General Assembly. The choice was made that year without opposition; but the year

following, when I was again propos'd (the choice, like that of the members, being annual), a new member made a long speech against me, in order to favour some other candidate. I was, however, chosen, which was the more agreeable to me, as, besides the pay for the immediate service as clerk, the place gave me a better opportunity of keeping up an interest among the members, which secur'd to me the business of printing the votes, laws, paper money, and other occasional jobbs for the public, that, on the whole, were very profitable.

I therefore did not like the opposition of this new member, who was a gentleman of fortune and education, with talents that were likely to give him, in time, great influence in the House, which, indeed, afterwards happened. I did not, however, aim at gaining his favour by paying any servile respect to him, but, after some time, took this other method. Having heard that he had in his library a certain very scarce and curious book, I wrote a note to him, expressing my desire of perusing that book, and requesting he would do me the favour of lending it to me for a few days. He sent it immediately, and I return'd it in about a week with another note, expressing strongly my sense of the favour. When we next met in the House, he spoke to me (which he had never done before), and with great civility; and he ever after manifested a readiness to serve me on all occasions, so that we became great friends, and our friendship continued to his death.

This is another instance of the truth of an old maxim I had learned, which says, "*He that has once done you a kindness will be more ready to do you another, than he whom you yourself have obliged.*" And it shows how much more profitable it is prudently to remove, than to resent, return, and continue inimical proceedings.

In 1737, Colonel Spotswood, late governor of Virginia, and then postmaster-general, being dissatisfied with the conduct of his deputy at Philadelphia, respecting some negligence in rendering, and inexactitude of his accounts, took from him the commission and offered it to me. I accepted it readily, and found it of great advantage; for, tho' the salary was small, it facilitated the correspondence that improv'd my newspaper, increas'd the number demanded, as well as the advertisements to be inserted, so that it came to afford me a considerable income. My old competitor's newspaper declin'd proportionably, and I was satisfy'd without retaliating his refusal, while postmaster, to permit my papers being carried by the riders. Thus he suffer'd greatly from his neglect in due accounting; and I mention it as a lesson to those young men who may be employ'd in managing affairs for others, that they should always render accounts, and make remittances, with great clearness and punctuality. The character of observing such a conduct is the most powerful of all recommendations to new employments and increase of business.

I began now to turn my thoughts a little to public affairs, beginning, however, with small matters. The city watch was one of the first things that I conceiv'd to want regulation. It was managed by the constables of the respective wards in turn; the constable warned a number of housekeepers to attend him for the night. Those who chose never to attend, paid him six shillings a year to be excus'd, which was suppos'd to be for hiring substitutes, but was, in reality, much more than was necessary for that purpose, and made the constableness a place of profit; and the constable, for a little drink, often got such ragamuffins about him as a watch, that respectable housekeepers did not choose to mix with. Walking the rounds, too, was often neglected, and most of the nights spent in tippling. I thereupon wrote a paper to be read in Junto, representing these irregularities, but insisting more particularly on the inequality of this six-shilling tax of the constables, respecting the circumstances of those who paid it, since a poor widow housekeeper, all whose property to be guarded by the watch did not perhaps exceed the value of fifty pounds, paid as much as the wealthiest merchant, who had thousands of pounds' worth of goods in his stores.

On the whole, I proposed as a more effectual watch, the hiring of proper men to serve constantly in that business; and as a more equitable way of supporting the charge, the levying a tax that should be proportion'd to the property. This idea, being



approv'd by the Junto, was communicated to the other clubs, but as arising in each of them; and though the plan was not immediately carried into execution, yet, by preparing the minds of people for the change, it paved the way for the law obtained a few years after, when the members of our clubs were grown into more influence.

About this time I wrote a paper (first to be read in Junto, but it was afterward publish'd) on the different accidents and carelessnesses by which houses were set on fire, with cautions against them, and means proposed of avoiding them. This was much spoken of as a useful piece, and gave rise to a project, which soon followed it, of forming a company for the more ready extinguishing of fires, and mutual assistance in removing and securing of goods when in danger. Associates in this scheme were presently found, amounting to thirty. Our articles of agreement oblig'd every member to keep always in good order, and fit for use, a certain number of leather buckets, with strong bags and baskets (for packing and transporting of goods), which were to be brought to every fire; and we agreed to meet once a month and spend a social evening together, in discoursing and communicating such ideas as occurred to us upon the subject of fires, as might be useful in our conduct on such occasions.

The utility of this institution soon appeared, and many more desiring to be admitted than we thought convenient for one company, they were advised to

forin another, which was accordingly done ; and this went on, one new company being formed after another, till they became so numerous as to include most of the inhabitants who were men of property ; and now, at the time of my writing this, tho' upward of fifty years since its establishment, that which I first formed, called the Union Fire Company, still subsists and flourishes, tho' the first members are all deceas'd but myself and one, who is older by a year than I am. The small fines that have been paid by members for absence at the monthly meetings have been apply'd to the purchase of fire-engines, ladders, fire-hooks, and other useful implements for each company, so that I question whether there is a city in the world better provided with the means of putting a stop to beginning conflagrations ; and, in fact, since these institutions, the city has never lost by fire more than one or two houses at a time, and the flames have often been extinguished before the house in which they began has been half consumed.\*

---

\* This fire company was formed Dec. 7, 1736. It was designed primarily for the security of the property of its members, though they did not limit their usefulness to their own members when their property was not in danger. The Union Fire Company was in active service as late as 1791. In a roll of the companies of that day we find it heading the list, having thirty members, one engine, two hundred and fifty buckets, thirteen ladders, two hooks, no bags, and one eighty-foot rope.

It will be seen by the articles of association which follow, that the number of members was restricted to thirty. The applicants in a year or two much exceeded this number, and there being no possibility of uniting with it, measures were taken to form a new company, which resulted in 1738 in the establishment of the second voluntary fire company,

In 1739 arrived among us from Ireland the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, who had made himself re-

---

"The Fellowship." See a series of interesting sketches of the fire apparatus and the Philadelphia Fire Department, between the years 1701 and 1802, written for the Philadelphia *Sunday Dispatch*, by Thompson Westcott.

*"Articles of the Union Fire Company of Philadelphia, originally formed Dec. 7, 1736.*

"I. That we will each of us, at his own proper charge, provide six leather buckets and two bags, the bags to be made of good ozenburgs or wider linen, whereof each bag shall contain four yards at least, and shall have a running cord near the mouth, which said buckets and bags shall be marked with their own names respectively and company, and shall be kept ready at hand, and shall be applied to no other use than for preserving our own and our fellow-citizens' houses, goods and effects, in case of fire as aforesaid.

"II. That if any of us shall neglect to provide his buckets and bags as aforesaid, or when so provided shall neglect to keep them ready for the uses herein mentioned, or shall apply them to any other purpose, he shall forfeit and pay to the clerk for the time being, for the use of the company, the sum of 1-8th of a dollar for each bucket or bag misapplied or wanting, except any of them happen to be lost at a fire.

"III. That if any of the buckets or bags so marked as aforesaid shall be lost or damaged at any fire, the same shall be supplied or repaired out of the stock of the company, provided notice be given thereof to the company within four months after such loss or damage.

"IV. That we will, all of us, upon hearing of FIRE breaking out, immediately repair to the same with at least one-half of our buckets and bags, and there exert our best endeavors to extinguish such fire, and preserve the goods and effects of such of us as may be in danger. And if more than one of us shall be in danger at one time, we will divide ourselves with the remainder of our buckets and bags as nearly as may be, to be equally helpful. And to prevent suspicious persons from coming into or carrying any goods out of such houses as may be in danger, two of our members shall constantly attend at the doors until all the goods and effects that can be saved are packed up and carried to a place of safety. And upon hearing the cry of FIRE in the night-time we will immediately cause sufficient lights to be distributed in such parts of the houses of such of our company as may be thought in danger, in

markable there as an itinerant preacher. He was at first permitted to preach in some of our churches ; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refus'd him their pulpits, and he was oblig'd to preach in the fields. The multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended his sermons were enormous,

---

order to prevent confusion and enable their friends to give them more speedy and effectual assistance. And moreover, as this association is intended for a general benefit, we do further agree, that whenever a FIRE breaks out in any part of the city, though none of our houses, goods or effects may be in apparent danger, we will nevertheless repair thither with our buckets and bags as before mentioned, and give our utmost assistance to such of our fellow-citizens as may stand in need of it, in the same manner as if they belonged to this company.

"V. Provides for eight meetings during the year, and every member shall pay three shillings for his share of the reckoning of the evening. Members not there at the commencement of the evening to pay one shilling ; those not there during the entire evening to pay four shilling.

"VI. Provides that each of us, in our turns, agreeable to the order of our subscriptions, serve the company as clerk or get some other member to serve in our stead, whose duty it shall be to inspect the condition of all our buckets, bags, ladders and engine, and make report at each meeting. The article also sets out the duties of the clerk, such as giving notice of meetings, keeping minutes, etc.

"VII. Provides for the election of treasurer and prescribes his duties.

"VIII. Provides that the company shall not consist of more than thirty members, etc.

"IX. Provides that each member shall keep a copy of these articles and a list of all the members' names fixed in open view near his buckets, on pain of forfeiture for each, as often as the same is reported to the company.

"X. Provides that all fines shall be paid to the treasurer for the use of the company.

"XI. That upon the death of any of our company the survivors shall, in time of danger as aforesaid, be aiding and assisting the widow of such decedent during her widowhood, as if her husband had been living—she only keeping her buckets and bags in repair, and causing them to be sent to every fire aforesaid."—ED.

and it was matter of speculation to me, who was one of the number, to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admir'd and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless or indifferent about religion, it seem'd as if all the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk thro' the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street.

And it being found inconvenient to assemble in the open air, subject to its inclemencies, the building of a house to meet in was no sooner propos'd, and persons appointed to receive contributions, but sufficient sums were soon receiv'd to procure the ground and erect the building, which was one hundred feet long and seventy broad, about the size of Westminster Hall; and the work was carried on with such spirit as to be finished in a much shorter time than could have been expected. Both house and ground were vested in trustees, expressly for the use of any preacher of any religious persuasion who might desire to say something to the people at Philadelphia; the design in building not being to accommodate any particular sect, but the inhabitants in general; so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Moham-

medanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service.

Mr. Whitefield, in leaving us, went preaching all the way thro' the colonies to Georgia. The settlement of that province had lately been begun, but, instead of being made with hardy, industrious husbandmen, accustomed to labor, the only people fit for such an enterprise, it was with families of broken shop-keepers and other insolvent debtors, many of indolent and idle habits, taken out of the jails, who, being set down in the woods, unqualified for clearing land, and unable to endure the hardships of a new settlement, perished in numbers, leaving many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspir'd the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preach'd up this charity, and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design, but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at a great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house here, and brought the children to it. This I advis'd; but he was resolute in his first project, rejected my counsel, and I therefore refus'd to contribute. I happened soon after to

attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had, by precaution, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong desire to give, and applied to a neighbour, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately [made] to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "*At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.*"

Some of Mr. Whitefield's enemies affected to suppose that he would apply these collections to his own private emolument; but I, who was intimately acquainted with him (being employed in printing his Sermons and Journals, etc.), never had the least

suspicion of his integrity, but am to this day decidedly of opinion that he was in all his conduct a perfectly *honest man*; and methinks my testimony in his favour ought to have the more weight, as we had no religious connection. He us'd, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.

The following instance will show something of the terms on which we stood. Upon one of his arrivals from England at Boston, he wrote to me that he should come soon to Philadelphia, but knew not where he could lodge when there, as he understood his old friend and host, Mr. Benezet, was removed to Germantown. My answer was, "You know my house; if you can make shift with its scanty accommodations, you will be most heartily welcome." He reply'd, that if I made that kind offer for Christ's sake, I should not miss of a reward. And I returned, "*Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.*" One of our common acquaintance jocosely remark'd, that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favour, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contriv'd to fix it on earth.

The last time I saw Mr. Whitefield was in London, when he consulted me about his Orphan House



concern, and his purpose of appropriating it to the establishment of a college.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observ'd the most exact silence. He preach'd one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-street, and on the west side of Second-street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were fill'd with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-street, when some noise in that street obscur'd it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were fill'd with auditors, to each of whom I allow'd two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconcil'd me to the newspaper accounts of his having preach'd to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the antient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly compos'd, and those which he had often preach'd in the course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improv'd by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis,

every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turn'd and well plac'd, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleas'd with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that receiv'd from an excellent piece of musick. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter can not well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals.

His writing and printing from time to time gave great advantage to his enemies; unguarded expressions, and even erroneous opinions, delivered in preaching, might have been afterwards explain'd or qualifi'd by supposing others that might have accompany'd them, or they might have been deny'd; but *littera scripta manet*. Critics attack'd his writings violently, and with so much appearance of reason as to diminish the number of his votaries and prevent their encrease; so that I am of opinion if he had never written any thing, he would have left behind him a much more numerous and important sect, and his reputation might in that case have been still growing, even after his death, as there being nothing of his writing on which to found a censure and give him a lower character, his proselytes would be left at liberty to feign for him as great a variety of excellences as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed.

My business was now continually augmenting, and my circumstances growing daily easier, my

newspaper having become very profitable, as being for a time almost the only one in this and the neighbouring provinces. I experienced, too, the truth of the observation, "*that after getting the first hundred pound, it is more easy to get the second,*" money itself being of a prolific nature.

The partnership at Carolina having succeeded, I was encourag'd to engage in others, and to promote several of my workmen, who had behaved well, by establishing them with printing-houses in different colonies, on the same terms with that in Carolina. Most of them did well, being enabled at the end of our term, six years, to purchase the types of me and go on working for themselves, by which means several families were raised. Partnerships often finish in quarrels; but I was happy in this, that mine were all carried on and ended amicably, owing, I think, a good deal to the precaution of having very explicitly settled, in our articles, every thing to be done by or expected from each partner, so that there was nothing to dispute, which precaution I would therefore recommend to all who enter into partnerships; for, whatever esteem partners may have for, and confidence in each other at the time of the contract, little jealousies and disgusts may arise, with ideas of inequality in the care and burden of the business, etc., which are attended often with breach of friendship and of the connection, perhaps with lawsuits and other disagreeable consequences.

\*\*

I had, on the whole, abundant reason to be satisfied with my being established in Pennsylvania. There were, however, two things that I regretted, there being no provision for defense, nor for a compleat education of youth; no militia, nor any college. I therefore, in 1743, drew up a proposal for establishing an academy; and at that time, thinking the Reverend Mr. Peters, who was out of employ, a fit person to superintend such an institution, I communicated the project to him; but he, having more profitable views in the service of the proprietaries, which succeeded, declin'd the undertaking; and, not knowing another at that time suitable for such a trust, I let the scheme lie a while dormant. I succeeded better the next year, 1744, in proposing and establishing a Philosophical Society. The paper I wrote for that purpose will be found among my writings, when collected.\*

---

\* The paper here referred to will be found in the 4th vol. of *Sparks' Works of Franklin*, p. 14. It bears date the 14th of May, 1743, Old Style. It is entitled, "A proposal for promoting useful knowledge among the British Plantations in America." It commences by speaking of the great extent of the colonial possessions, "having different climates and different soils, producing different plants, mines, and minerals, and capable of different improvements, manufactures," etc.

It then says: "The first drudgery of settling new colonies, which confines the attention of people to mere necessities, is now pretty well over; and there are many in every province in circumstances that set them at ease, and afford leisure to cultivate the finer arts, and improve the common stock of knowledge. To such of these who are men of speculation, many hints must from time to time arise, many observations occur, which if well examined, pursued, and improved, might produce discoveries to the advantage of some or all of the British Plantations, or

With respect to defense, Spain having been several years at war against Great Britain, and being

---

to the benefit of mankind in general. . . . But as, from the extent of the country, such persons are widely separated, and seldom can see and converse or be acquainted with each other, so that many useful particulars remain uncommunicated, die with the discoverers, and are lost to mankind ; it is to remedy this inconvenience for the future, proposed—

“That one society be formed of virtuosi, or ingenious men, residing in the several colonies, to be called The American Philosophical Society, who are to maintain constant correspondence.

“That Philadelphia, being the city nearest to the centre of the continent colonies, communicating with all of them northward and southward by post, and with all the islands by sea, and having the advantage of a good growing library, be the centre of the Society.

“That at Philadelphia there be always at least seven members, viz. a physician, a botanist, a mathematician, a chemist, a mechanician, a geographer, and a general natural philosopher, besides a president, treasurer, and secretary.

“That these members meet once a month, or oftener, at their own expense, to communicate to each other their observations and experiments ; to receive, read, and consider such letters, communications, or queries as shall be sent from distant members ; to direct the dispersing of the copies of such communications as are valuable, to other distant members, in order to procure their sentiments thereupon.”

Then follows an enumeration, made with some detail, of the subjects on which it was proposed that the Society should be occupied : including investigations in botany ; in medicine ; in mineralogy and mining ; in mathematics ; in chemistry ; in mechanics ; in arts, trades, and manufactures ; in geography and topography ; in agriculture ; and “all philosophical experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the conveniences or pleasures of life.”

The circular proposes that “a correspondence be kept up with the Royal Society of London, and the Dublin Society ; that abstracts of the communications be sent quarterly to all the members ; and that, at the end of every year, collections be made and printed of such experiments, discoveries, and improvements, as may be thought of public advantage.”

The duties of the secretary are particularly laid down, and they are

at length join'd by France, which brought us into great danger ; and the laboured and long-continued

---

very arduous ; requiring that he attend to all the correspondence, "abstract, correct, and methodize such papers as require it, and as he shall be directed to do by the president, after they have been considered, debated, and digested in the Society ; to enter copies thereof in the Society's books, and make out copies for distant members." And after enumerating these difficult duties, the circular closes by saying :

"Benjamin Franklin, the writer of this proposal, offers himself to serve the Society as their secretary, till they shall be provided with one more capable."

In this project will be found all the leading features of the present American Philosophical Society. There can be no doubt that from the day when it was proposed the necessary measures for carrying it into execution were taken. Dr. Thomas Bond (himself one of the original members), in an oration delivered before the Society in 1782, says :— "Franklin gradually established many necessary institutions, among which was this Philosophical Society, so early as 1743, when the plan was formed and published, the members chosen, and an invitation given to all ingenious persons to co-operate and correspond with them on the laudable occasion." It is true that Franklin, in his Autobiography, gives the date 1744, saying, "in that year I succeeded in proposing and establishing a Philosophical Society. The paper I wrote for that purpose will be found among my writings, if not lost with many others." But Franklin wrote from memory, and the date of the paper referred to, which was doubtless the proposal of 1743, shows that he had made a mistake in the year.

In a letter to Cadwallader Colden, dated New York, 5th April, 1744, Dr. Franklin acquaints him "that the Society, as far as relates to Philadelphia, was actually formed, and had had several meetings to mutual satisfaction."

In this letter the following list is presented of the original members :

Dr. THOMAS BOND, as Physician.

Mr. JOHN BARTRAM, as Botanist.

Mr. THOMAS GODFREY, as Mathematician.

Mr. SAMUEL RHODES, as Mechanician.

Mr. WILLIAM PARSONS, as Geographer.

endeavour of our governor, Thomas, to prevail with our Quaker Assembly to pass a militia law, and make other provisions for the security of the province, having proved abortive, I determined to try what might be done by a voluntary association of the people. To promote this, I first wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *PLAIN TRUTH*, in which I stated our defenceless situation in strong lights, with the necessity of union and discipline for our defense, and promis'd to propose in a few days an association, to be generally signed for that purpose. The pamphlet had a sudden and surprising effect. I was call'd upon for the instrument of association, and having settled the draft of it with a few friends, I appointed a meeting of the citizens in the large building before mentioned. The house was pretty full; I had prepared a number of printed copies, and provided pens and ink dispers'd all over the room. I

---

Dr. PHINEAS BOND, as General Natural Philosopher.

Mr. THOMAS HOPKINSON, President.

Mr. WILLIAM COLEMAN, Treasurer.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Secretary.

Though the American Philosophical Society was not, strictly speaking, the organic continuation of the Junto, there can be no doubt that the plan of establishing it had been often brought before the Junto for consideration, for we know that it was the practice of Franklin, when he had new projects to propose, to have them first discussed in the Club. But a stronger evidence still of the part which they took in forming the new institution is presented by the fact that of the nine original members of the Philosophical Society, six, including the three officers, are known to have belonged to the Junto,—namely, Franklin, Hopkinson, Coleman, Godfrey, Rhoads, and Parsons.—ED.

harangued them a little on the subject, read the paper, and explained it, and then distributed the copies, which were eagerly signed, not the least objection being made.

When the company separated, and the papers were collected, we found above twelve hundred hands; and, other copies being dispersed in the country, the subscribers amounted at length to upward of ten thousand. These all furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, formed themselves into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week to be instructed in the manual exercise, and other parts of military discipline. The women, by subscriptions among themselves, provided silk colors, which they presented to the companies, painted with different devices and mottos, which I supplied.

The officers of the companies composing the Philadelphia regiment, being met, chose me for their colonel; but, conceiving myself unfit, I declin'd that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and man of influence, who was accordingly appointed. I then propos'd a lottery to defray the expense of building a battery below the town, and furnishing it with cannon. It filled expeditiously, and the battery was soon erected, the merlons being fram'd of logs and fill'd with earth. We bought some old cannon from Boston, but, these not being sufficient, we wrote to England for more, soliciting, at the same time, our proprietaries for



some assistance, tho' without much expectation of obtaining it.

Meanwhile, Colonel Lawrence, William Allen, Abram Taylor, Esqr., and myself were sent to New York by the associators, commission'd to borrow some cannon of Governor Clinton. He at first refus'd us peremptorily ; but at dinner with his council, where there was great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of that place then was, he softened by degrees, and said he would lend us six. After a few more bumpers he advanc'd to ten ; and at length he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, which we soon transported and mounted on our battery, where the associators kept a nightly guard while the war lasted, and among the rest I regularly took my turn of duty there as a common soldier.

My activity in these operations was agreeable to the governor and council ; they took me into confidence, and I was consulted by them in every measure wherein their concurrence was thought useful to the association. Calling in the aid of religion, I propos'd to them the proclaiming a fast, to promote reformation, and implore the blessing of Heaven on our undertaking. They embrac'd the motion ; but, as it was the first fast ever thought of in the province, the secretary had no precedent from which to draw the proclamation. My education in New England, where a fast is proclaimed every year, was here of

some advantage : I drew it in the accustomed stile , it was translated into German, printed in both languages, and divulg'd thro' the province. This gave the clergy of the different sects an opportunity of influencing their congregations to join in the association, and it would probably have been general among all but Quakers if the peace had not soon interven'd.

It was thought by some of my friends that, by my activity in these affairs, I should offend that sect, and thereby lose my interest in the Assembly of the province, where they formed a great majority. A young gentleman who had likewise some friends in the House, and wished to succeed me as their clerk, acquainted me that it was decided to displace me at the next election ; and he, therefore, in good will, advis'd me to resign, as more consistent with my honour than being turn'd out. My answer to him was, that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offer'd to him. " I approve," says I, " of his rule, and will practice it with a small addition ; I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or other making reprisals on my adversaries." I heard, however, no more of this ; I was chosen again unanimously as usual at the next election. Possibly, as they dislik'd my

late intimacy with the members of council, who had join'd the governors in all the disputes about military preparations, with which the House had long been harass'd, they might have been pleas'd if I would voluntarily have left them; but they did not care to displace me on account merely of my zeal for the association, and they could not well give another reason.

Indeed I had some cause to believe that the defense of the country was not disagreeable to any of them, provided they were not requir'd to assist in it. And I found that a much greater number of them than I could have imagined, tho' against offensive war, were clearly for the defensive. Many pamphlets *pro* and *con* were publish'd on the subject, and some by good Quakers, in favour of defense, which I believe convinc'd most of their younger people.

A transaction in our fire company gave me some insight into their prevailing sentiments. It had been propos'd that we should encourage the scheme for building a battery by laying out the present stock, then about sixty pounds, in tickets of the lottery. By our rules, no money could be dispos'd of till the next meeting after the proposal. The company consisted of thirty members, of which twenty-two were Quakers, and eight only of other persuasions. We eight punctually attended the meeting; but, tho' we thought that some of the Quakers would join us, we were by no means sure of a majority.

Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appear'd to oppose the measure. He expressed much sorrow that it had ever been propos'd, as he said *Friends* were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. We told him that we saw no reason for that; we were the minority, and if *Friends* were against the measure, and out-voted us, we must and should, agreeably to the usage of all societies, submit. When the hour for business arriv'd it was mov'd to put the vote; he allow'd we might then do it by the rules, but, as he could assure us that a number of members intended to be present for the purpose of opposing it, it would be but candid to allow a little time for their appearing.

While we were disputing this, a waiter came to tell me two gentlemen below desir'd to speak with me. I went down, and found they were two of our Quaker members. They told me there were eight of them assembled at a tavern just by; that they were determin'd to come and vote with us if there should be occasion, which they hop'd would not be the case, and desir'd we would not call for their assistance if we could do without it, as their voting for such a measure might embroil them with their elders and friends. Being thus secure of a majority, I went up, and after a little seeming hesitation, agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris allow'd to be extreamly fair. Not one of his opposing friends appear'd, at which he express'd

great surprize ; and, at the expiration of the hour, we carry'd the resolution eight to one ; and as, of the twenty-two Quakers, eight were ready to vote with us, and thirteen, by their absence, manifested that they were not inclin'd to oppose the measure, I afterward estimated the proportion of Quakers sincerely against defense as one to twenty-one only ; for these were all regular members of that society, and in good reputation among them, and had due notice of what was propos'd at that meeting.

The honorable and learned Mr. Logan, who had always been of that sect, was one who wrote an address to them, declaring his approbation of defensive war, and supporting his opinion by many strong arguments. He put into my hands sixty pounds to be laid out in lottery tickets for the battery, with directions to apply what prizes might be drawn wholly to that service. He told me the following anecdote of his old master, William Penn, respecting defense. He came over from England, when a young man, with that proprietary, and as his secretary. It was war-time, and their ship was chas'd by an armed vessel, suppos'd to be an enemy. Their captain prepar'd for defense ; but told William Penn, and his company of Quakers, that he did not expect their assistance, and they might retire into the cabin, which they did, except James Logan, who chose to stay upon deck, and was quarter'd to a gun. The suppos'd enemy prov'd a friend, so there was no fighting ; but when the secretary went down to com-

municate the intelligence, William Penn rebuk'd him severely for staying upon deck, and undertaking to assist in defending the vessel, contrary to the principles of *Friends*, especially as it had not been required by the captain. This reproof, being before all the company, piqu'd the secretary, who answer'd, "*I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger.*"

My being many years in the Assembly, the majority of which were constantly Quakers, gave me frequent opportunities of seeing the embarrassment given them by their principle against war, whenever application was made to them, by order of the crown, to grant aids for military purposes. They were unwilling to offend government, on the one hand, by a direct refusal; and their friends, the body of the Quakers, on the other, by a compliance contrary to their principles; hence a variety of evasions to avoid complying, and modes of disguising the compliance when it became unavoidable. The common mode at last was, to grant money under the phrase of its being "*for the king's use,*" and never to inquire how it was applied.

But, if the demand was not directly from the crown, that phrase was found not so proper, and some other was to be invented. As, when powder was wanting (I think it was for the garrison at Louisburg), and the government of New England

solicited a grant of some from Pennsylvania, which was much urg'd on the House by Governor Thomas, they could not grant money to buy powder, because that was an ingredient of war; but they voted an aid to New England of three thousand pounds, to be put into the hands of the governor, and appropriated it for the purchasing of bread, flour, wheat, or *other grain*. Some of the council, desirous of giving the House still further embarrassment, advis'd the governor not to accept provision, as not being the thing he had demanded; but he reply'd, "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; other grain is gunpowder," which he accordingly bought, and they never objected to it.\*

It was in allusion to this fact that, when in our fire company we feared the success of our proposal in favour of the lottery, and I had said to my friend Mr. Syng, one of our members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire-engine with the money; the Quakers can have no objection to that; and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a *fire-engine*." "I see," says he, "you have improv'd by being so long in the Assembly; your equivocal project would be just a match for their wheat or *other grain*."

These embarrassments that the Quakers suffer'd

---

\* See the votes.—[*Marg. note.*]

from having establish'd and published it as one of their principles that no kind of war was lawful, and which, being once published, they could not afterwards, however they might change their minds, easily get rid of, reminds me of what I think a more prudent conduct in another sect among us, that of the Dunkers. I was acquainted with one of its founders, Michael Welfare, soon after it appear'd. He complain'd to me that they were grievously calumniated by the zealots of other persuasions, and charg'd with abominable principles and practices, to which they were utter strangers. I told him this had always been the case with new sects, and that, to put a stop to such abuse, I imagin'd it might be well to publish the articles of their belief, and the rules of their discipline. He said that it had been propos'd among them, but not agreed to, for this reason: "When we were first drawn together as a society," says he, "it had pleased God to enlighten our minds so far as to see that some doctrines, which we once esteemed truths, were errors; and that others, which we had esteemed errors, were real truths. From time to time He has been pleased to afford us farther light, and our principles have been improving, and our errors diminishing. Now we are not sure that we are arrived at the end of this progression, and at the perfection of spiritual or theological knowledge; and we fear that, if we should once print our confession of faith, we should feel ourselves as if bound and confin'd by it, and



perhaps be unwilling to receive farther improvement, and our successors still more so, as conceiving what we their elders and founders had done, to be something sacred, never to be departed from."

This modesty in a sect is perhaps a singular instance in the history of mankind, every other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man traveling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, tho' in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them. To avoid this kind of embarrassment, the Quakers have of late years been gradually declining the public service in the Assembly and in the magistracy, choosing rather to quit their power than their principle.

In order of time, I should have mentioned before, that having, in 1742, invented an open stove for the better warming of rooms, and at the same time saving fuel, as the fresh air admitted was warmed in entering, I made a present of the model to Mr. Robert Grace, one of my early friends, who, having an iron-furnace, found the casting of the plates for these stoves a profitable thing, as they were growing in demand. To promote that demand, I wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled "*An Account of the new-invented Pennsylvania Fireplaces; wherein their Construction and Manner of Opera-*

*tion is particularly explained; their Advantages above every other Method of warming Rooms demonstrated; and all Objections that have been raised against the Use of them answered and obviated,"* etc. This pamphlet had a good effect. Gov'r. Thomas was so pleas'd with the construction of this stove, as described in it, that he offered to give me a patent for the sole vending of them for a term of years; but I declin'd it from a principle which has ever weighed with me on such occasions, viz., *That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.*

An ironmonger in London however, assuming a good deal of my pamphlet, and working it up into his own, and making some small changes in the machine, which rather hurt its operation, got a patent for it there, and made, as I was told, a little fortune by it. And this is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, tho' not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes. The use of these fire-places in very many houses, both of this and the neighboring colonies, has been, and is, a great saving of wood to the inhabitants.

Peace being concluded, and the association business therefore at an end, I turn'd my thoughts again to the affair of establishing an academy. The first

step I took was to associate in the design a number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part; the next was to write and publish a pamphlet, entitled *Proposals relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania*. This I distributed among the principal inhabitants gratis; and as soon as I could suppose their minds a little prepared by the perusal of it, I set on foot a subscription for opening and supporting an academy: it was to be paid in quotas yearly for five years; by so dividing it, I judg'd the subscription might be larger, and I believe it was so, amounting to no less, if I remember right, than five thousand pounds.

In the introduction to these proposals, I stated their publication, not as an act of mine, but of some *publick-spirited gentlemen*, avoiding as much as I could, according to my usual rule, the presenting myself to the publick as the author of any scheme for their benefit.

The subscribers, to carry the project into immediate execution, chose out of their number twenty-four trustees, and appointed Mr. Francis, then attorney-general, and myself to draw up constitutions for the government of the academy; which being done and signed, a house was hired, masters engag'd, and the schools opened, I think, in the same year, 1749.

The scholars increasing fast, the house was soon found too small, and we were looking out for a piece of ground, properly situated, with intention to build,

when Providence threw into our way a large house ready built, which, with a few alterations, might well serve our purpose. This was the building before mentioned, erected by the hearers of Mr. Whitefield, and was obtained for us in the following manner.

It is to be noted that the contributions to this building being made by people of different sects, care was taken in the nomination of trustees, in whom the building and ground was to be vested, that a predominancy should not be given to any sect, lest in time that predominancy might be a means of appropriating the whole to the use of such sect, contrary to the original intention. It was therefore that one of each sect was appointed, viz., one Church-of-England man, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Moravian, etc., those, in case of vacancy by death, were to fill it by election from among the contributors. The Moravian happen'd not to please his colleagues, and on his death they resolved to have no other of that sect. The difficulty then was, how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mention'd me, with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevail'd with them to chuse me. The enthusiasm which existed when the house was built had long since abated, and its

trustees had not been able to procure fresh contributions for paying the ground-rent, and discharging some other debts the building had occasion'd, which embarrass'd them greatly. Being now a member of both setts of trustees, that for the building and that for the academy, I had a good opportunity of negotiating with both, and brought them finally to an agreement, by which the trustees for the building were to cede it to those of the academy, the latter undertaking to discharge the debt, to keep for ever open in the building a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the original intention, and maintain a free-school for the instruction of poor children. Writings were accordingly drawn, and on paying the debts the trustees of the academy were put in possession of the premises; and by dividing the great and lofty hall into stories, and different rooms above and below for the several schools, and purchasing some additional ground, the whole was soon made fit for our purpose, and the scholars remov'd into the building. The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials, and superintending the work, fell upon me; and I went thro' it the more cheerfully, as it did not then interfere with my private business, having the year before taken a very able, industrious, and honest partner, Mr. David Hall, with whose character I was well acquainted, as he had work'd for me four years. He took off my hands all care of the printing-office, paying me punctually my share of the

profits. This partnership continued eighteen years, successfully for us both.

The trustees of the academy, after a while, were incorporated by a charter from the governor; their funds were increas'd by contributions in Britain and grants of land from the proprietaries, to which the Assembly has since made considerable addition; and thus was established the present University of Philadelphia. I have been continued one of its trustees from the beginning, now near forty years, and have had the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth who have receiv'd their education in it, distinguish'd by their improv'd abilities, serviceable in public stations, and ornaments to their country.\*

When I disengaged myself, as above mentioned, from private business, I flatter'd myself that, by the sufficient tho' moderate fortune I had acquir'd, I had secured leisure during the rest of my life for philosophical studies and amusements. I purchased all Dr. Spence's apparatus, who had come from England to lecture here, and I proceeded in my electrical experiments with great alacrity; but the publick, now considering me as a man of leisure, laid hold of me for their purposes, every part of our

---

\* The old "Academy," as the building of which Franklin speaks was called, has given place to a new and tasteful edifice. For many years the new building had been occupied as an academy, preparatory to the University, commodious buildings for which were erected in South Ninth street, near Chestnut.—ED.

civil government, and almost at the same time, imposing some duty upon me. The governor put me into the commission of the peace; the corporation of the city chose me of the common council, and soon after an alderman; and the citizens at large chose me a burgess to represent them in Assembly. This latter station was the more agreeable to me, as I was at length tired with sitting there to hear debates, in which, as clerk, I could take no part, and which were often so unentertaining that I was induc'd to amuse myself with making magic squares or circles, or any thing to avoid weariness; and I conceiv'd my becoming a member would enlarge my power of doing good. I would not, however, insinuate that my ambition was not flatter'd by all these promotions; it certainly was; for, considering my low beginning, they were great things to me; and they were still more pleasing, as being so many spontaneous testimonies of the public good opinion, and by me entirely unsolicited.

The office of justice of the peace I try'd a little, by attending a few courts, and sitting on the bench to hear causes; but finding that more knowledge of the common law than I possess'd was necessary to act in that station with credit, I gradually withdrew from it, excusing myself by my being oblig'd to attend the higher duties of a legislator in the Assembly. My election to this trust was repeated every year for ten years, without my ever asking any elector for his vote, or signifying, either directly

or indirectly, any desire of being chosen. On taking my seat in the House, my son was appointed their clerk.

The year following, a treaty being to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, the governor sent a message to the House, proposing that they should nominate some of their members, to be join'd with some members of council, as commissioners for that purpose.\* The House named the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself; and, being commission'd, we went to Carlisle, and met the Indians accordingly.

As those people are extreemly apt to get drunk, and, when so, are very quarrelsome and disorderly, we strictly forbad the selling any liquor to them; and when they complain'd of this restriction, we told them that if they would continue sober during the treaty, we would give them plenty of rum when business was over. They promis'd this, and they kept their promise, because they could get no liquor, and the treaty was conducted very orderly, and concluded to mutual satisfaction. They then claim'd and receiv'd the rum; this was in the afternoon: they were near one hundred men, women, and children, and were lodg'd in temporary cabins, built in the form of a square, just without the town. In the evening, hearing a great noise among them, the commissioners walk'd out to see what was the matter. We found they had made a great bonfire

---

\* See the votes to have this more correctly.—[*Marg. note.*]



in the middle of the square; they were all drunk, men and women, quarreling and fighting. Their dark-colour'd bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, form'd a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagin'd; there was no appeasing the tumult, and we retired to our lodging. At midnight a number of them came thundering at our door, demanding more rum, of which we took no notice.

The next day, sensible they had misbehav'd in giving us that disturbance, they sent three of their old counselors to make their apology. The orator acknowledg'd the fault, but laid it upon the rum; and then endeavored to excuse the rum by saying, "*The Great Spirit, who made all things, made every thing for some use, and whatever use he design'd any thing for, that use it should always be put to. Now, when he made rum, he said, 'Let this be for the Indians to get drunk with,' and it must be so.*" And, indeed, if it be the design of Providence to extirpate these savages in order to make room for cultivators of the earth, it seems not improbable that rum may be the appointed means. It has already annihilated all the tribes who formerly inhabited the sea-coast.

In 1751, Dr. Thomas Bond, a particular friend of mine, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia (a very beneficent design,

which has been ascrib'd to me, but was originally his), for the reception and cure of poor sick persons, whether inhabitants of the province or strangers. He was zealous and active in endeavouring to procure subscriptions for it, but the proposal being a novelty in America, and at first not well understood, he met but with small success.

At length he came to me with the compliment that he found there was no such thing as carrying a public-spirited project through without my being concern'd in it. "For," says he, "I am often ask'd by those to whom I propose subscribing, Have you consulted Franklin upon this business? And what does he think of it? And when I tell them that I have not (supposing it rather out of your line), they do not subscribe, but say they will consider of it." I enquired into the nature and probable utility of his scheme, and receiving from him a very satisfactory explanation, I not only subscrib'd to it myself, but engag'd heartily in the design of procuring subscriptions from others. Previously, however, to the solicitation, I endeavoured to prepare the minds of the people by writing on the subject in the newspapers, which was my usual custom in such cases. but which he had omitted.

The subscriptions afterwards were more free and generous; but, beginning to flag, I saw they would be insufficient without some assistance from the Assembly, and therefore propos'd to petition for it, which was done. The country members did not at

first relish the project; they objected that it could only be serviceable to the city, and therefore the citizens alone should be at the expense of it; and they doubted whether the citizens themselves generally approv'd of it. My allegation on the contrary, that it met with such approbation as to leave no doubt of our being able to raise two thousand pounds by voluntary donations, they considered as a most extravagant supposition, and utterly impossible.

On this I form'd my plan; and, asking leave to bring in a bill for incorporating the contributors according to the prayer of their petition, and granting them a blank sum of money, which leave was obtained chiefly on the consideration that the House could throw the bill out if they did not like it, I drew it so as to make the important clause a conditional one, viz., “And be it enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that when the said contributors shall have met and chosen their managers and treasurer, *and shall have raised by their contributions a capital stock of ——— value* (the yearly interest of which is to be applied to the accommodating of the sick poor in the said hospital, free of charge for diet, attendance, advice, and medicines), *and shall make the same appear to the satisfaction of the speaker of the Assembly for the time being,* that *then* it shall and may be lawful for the said speaker, and he is hereby required, to sign an order on the provincial treasurer for the payment of two

thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the said hospital, to be applied to the founding, building, and finishing of the same."

This condition carried the bill through; for the members, who had oppos'd the grant, and now conceiv'd they might have the credit of being charitable without the expence, agreed to its passage; and then, in soliciting subscriptions among the people, we urg'd the conditional promise of the law as an additional motive to give, since every man's donation would be doubled; thus the clause work'd both ways. The subscriptions accordingly soon exceeded the requisite sum, and we claim'd and receiv'd the public gift, which enabled us to carry the design into execution. A convenient and handsome building was soon erected; the institution has by constant experience been found useful, and flourishes to this day; and I do not remember any of my political manœuvres, the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excus'd myself for having made some use of cunning.

It was about this time that another projector, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, came to me with a request that I would assist him in procuring a subscription for erecting a new meeting-house. It was to be for the use of a congregation he had gathered among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Mr. Whitefield. Unwilling to make myself disagreeable to my fellow-citizens by too fre-

quently soliciting their contributions, I absolutely refus'd. He then desired I would furnish him with a list of the names of persons I knew by experience to be generous and public-spirited. I thought it would be unbecoming in me, after their kind compliance with my solicitations, to mark them out to be worried by other beggars, and therefore refus'd also to give such a list. He then desir'd I would at least give him my advice. "That I will readily do," said I; "and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those whom you know will give something; next, to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give any thing or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken." He laugh'd and thank'd me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he ask'd of *everybody*, and he obtain'd a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch-street.

Our city, tho' laid out with a beautifull regularity, the streets large, strait, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpav'd, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages plough'd them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross them; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had liv'd near what was call'd the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud while

purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length pav'd with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing, but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street pav'd with stone between the market and the brick'd foot-pavement, that was on each side next the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry-shod; but, the rest of the street not being pav'd, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon cover'd with mire, which was not remov'd, the city as yet having no scavengers.

After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man, who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean, by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbours' doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper setting forth the advantages to the neighbourhood that might be obtain'd by this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, etc., etc., as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having, in windy weather, the dust blown in upon their goods, etc., etc. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who

would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences ; it was unanimously sign'd, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this rais'd a general desire to have all the streets paved, and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose.

After some time I drew a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the Assembly. It was just before I went to England, in 1757, and did not pass till I was gone,\* and then with an alteration in the mode of assessment, which I thought not for the better, but with an additional provision for lighting as well as paving the streets, which was a great improvement. It was by a private person, the late Mr. John Clifton, his giving a sample of the utility of lamps, by placing one at his door, that the people were first impress'd with the idea of enlighting all the city. The honour of this public benefit has also been ascrib'd to me, but it belongs truly to that gentleman. I did but follow his example, and have only some merit to claim respecting the form of our lamps, as differing from the globe lamps we were at first supply'd with from London. Those we found inconvenient in these respects : they admitted no air below ; the smoke, therefore, did not readily go out above, but circulated in the globe, lodg'd on

---

\* See votes.

its inside, and soon obstructed the light they were intended to afford ; giving, besides, the daily trouble of wiping them clean ; and an accidental stroke on one of them would demolish it, and render it totally useless. I therefore suggested the composing them of four flat panes, with a long funnel above to draw up the smoke, and crevices admitting air below, to facilitate the ascent of the smoke ; by this means they were kept clean, and did not grow dark in a few hours, as the London lamps do, but continu'd bright till morning, and an accidental stroke would generally break but a single pane, easily repair'd.

I have sometimes wonder'd that the Londoners did not, from the effect holes in the bottom of the globe lamps us'd at Vauxhall have in keeping them clean, learn to have such holes in their street lamps. But, these holes being made for another purpose, viz., to communicate flame more suddenly to the wick by a little flax hanging down thro' them, the other use, of letting in air, seems not to have been thought of ; and therefore, after the lamps have been lit a few hours, the streets of London are very poorly illuminated.

The mention of these improvements puts me in mind of one I propos'd, when in London, to Dr. Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects. I had observ'd that the streets, when dry, were never swept, and the light dust carried away ; but it was suffer'd to accumulate till wet weather reduc'd it to



mud, and then, after lying some days so deep on the pavement that there was no crossing but in paths kept clean by poor people with brooms, it was with great labour rak'd together and thrown up into carts open above, the sides of which suffer'd some of the slush at every jolt on the pavement to shake out and fall, sometimes to the annoyance of foot-passengers. The reason given for not sweeping the dusty streets was, that the dust would fly into the windows of shops and houses.

An accidental occurrence had instructed me how much sweeping might be done in a little time. I found at my door in Craven-street, one morning, a poor woman sweeping my pavement with a birch broom; she appeared very pale and feeble, as just come out of a fit of sickness. I ask'd who employ'd her to sweep there; she said, "Nobody; but I am very poor and in distress, and I sweeps before gentlefolkses doors, and hopes they will give me something." I bid her sweep the whole street clean, and I would give her a shilling; this was at nine o'clock; at 12 she came for the shilling. From the slowness I saw at first in her working, I could scarce believe that the work was done so soon, and sent my servant to examine it, who reported that the whole street was swept perfectly clean, and all the dust plac'd in the gutter, which was in the middle; and the next rain wash'd it quite away, so that the pavement and even the kennel were perfectly clean.

I then judg'd that, if that feeble woman could sweep such a street in three hours, a strong, active man might have done it in half the time. And here let me remark the convenience of having but one gutter in such a narrow street, running down its middle, instead of two, one on each side, near the footway ; for where all the rain that falls on a street runs from the sides and meets in the middle, it forms there a current strong enough to wash away all the mud it meets with ; but when divided into two channels, it is often too weak to cleanse either, and only makes the mud it finds more fluid, so that the wheels of carriages and feet of horses throw and dash it upon the foot-pavement, which is thereby rendered foul and slippery, and sometimes splash it upon those who are walking. My proposal, communicated to the good doctor, was as follows :

“ For the more effectual cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster, it is proposed that the several watchmen be contracted with to have the dust swept up in dry seasons, and the mud rak'd up at other times, each in the several streets and lanes of his round ; that they be furnish'd with brooms and other proper instruments for these purposes, to be kept at their respective stands, ready to furnish the poor people they may employ in the service.

“ That in the dry summer months the dust be all swept up into heaps at proper distances, before the shops and windows of houses are usually opened.

when the scavengers, with close-covered carts, shall also carry it all away.

“That the mud, when rak’d up, be not left in heaps to be spread abroad again by the wheels of carriages and trampling of horses, but that the scavengers be provided with bodies of carts, not plac’d high upon wheels, but low upon sliders, with lattice bottoms, which, being cover’d with straw, will retain the mud thrown into them, and permit the water to drain from it, whereby it will become much lighter, water making the greatest part of its weight ; these bodies of carts to be plac’d at convenient distances, and the mud brought to them in wheelbarrows ; they remaining where plac’d till the mud is drain’d, and then horses brought to draw them away.”

I have since had doubts of the practicability of the latter part of this proposal, on account of the narrowness of some streets, and the difficulty of placing the draining-sleds so as not to encumber too much the passage ; but I am still of opinion that the former, requiring the dust to be swept up and carry’d away before the shops are open, is very practicable in the summer, when the days are long ; for, in walking thro’ the Strand and Fleet-street one morning at seven o’clock, I observ’d there was not one shop open, tho’ it had been daylight and the sun up above three hours ; the inhabitants of London chusing voluntarily to live much by candle-light, and sleep by sunshine, and yet often complain, a

little absurdly, of the duty on candles, and the high price of tallow.

Some may think these trifling matters not worth minding or relating; but when they consider that tho' dust blown into the eyes of a single person, or into a single shop on a windy day, is but of small importance, yet the great number of the instances in a populous city, and its frequent repetitions give it weight and consequence, perhaps they will not censure very severely those who bestow some attention to affairs of this seemingly low nature. Human felicity is produc'd not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. The money may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it; but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument. With these sentiments I have hazarded the few preceding pages, hoping they may afford hints which some time or other may be useful to a city I love, having lived many years in it very happily, and perhaps to some of our towns in America.

Having been for some time employed by the postmaster-general of America as his comptroller in regulating several offices, and bringing the officers to account, I was, upon his death in 1753, appointed, jointly with Mr. William Hunter, to succeed him, by a commission from the postmaster-general in England. The American office never had hitherto paid any thing to that of Britain. We were to have six hundred pounds a year between us, if we could make that sum out of the profits of the office. To do this, a variety of improvements were necessary; some of these were inevitably at first expensive, so that in the first four years the office became above nine hundred pounds in debt to us. But it soon after began to repay us; and before I was displac'd by a freak of the ministers, of which I shall speak hereafter, we had brought it to yield *three times* as much clear revenue to the crown as the postoffice of Ireland. Since that imprudent transaction, they have receiv'd from it—not one farthing!

The business of the postoffice occasion'd my taking a journey this year to New England, where the College of Cambridge, of their own motion, presented me with the degree of Master of Arts. Yale College, in Connecticut, had before made me a similar compliment. Thus, without studying in any college, I came to partake of their honours. They were conferr'd in consideration of my improvements and discoveries in the electric branch of natural philosophy.

In 1754, war with France being again apprehended, a congress of commissioners from the different colonies was, by an order of the Lords of Trade, to be assembled at Albany, there to confer with the chiefs of the Six Nations concerning the means of defending both their country and ours. Governor Hamilton, having receiv'd this order, acquainted the House with it, requesting they would furnish proper presents for the Indians, to be given on this occasion; and naming the speaker (Mr. Norris) and myself to join Mr. Thomas Penn and Mr. Secretary Peters as commissioners to act for Pennsylvania. The House approv'd the nomination, and provided the goods for the present, and tho' they did not much like treating out of the provinces; and we met the other commissioners at Albany about the middle of June.

In our way thither, I projected and drew a plan for the union of all the colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defense, and other important general purposes. As we pass'd thro' New York, I had there shown my project to Mr. James Alexander and Mr. Kennedy, two gentlemen of great knowledge in public affairs, and, being fortified by their approbation, I ventur'd to lay it before the Congress. It then appeared that several of the commissioners had form'd plans of the same kind. A previous question was first taken, whether a union should be established, which pass'd

in the affirmative unanimously. A committee was then appointed, one member from each colony, to consider the several plans and report. Mine happen'd to be preferr'd, and, with a few amendments, was accordingly reported.

By this plan the general government was to be administered by a president-general, appointed and supported by the crown, and a grand council was to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several colonies, met in their respective assemblies. The debates upon it in Congress went on daily, hand in hand with the Indian business. Many objections and difficulties were started, but at length they were all overcome, and the plan was unanimously agreed to, and copies ordered to be transmitted to the Board of Trade and to the assemblies of the several provinces. Its fate was singular: the assemblies did not adopt it, as they all thought there was too much *prerogative* in it, and in England it was judg'd to have too much of the *democratic*. The Board of Trade therefore did not approve of it, nor recommend it for the approbation of his majesty; but another scheme was form'd, supposed to answer the same purpose better, whereby the governors of the provinces, with some members of their respective councils, were to meet and order the raising of troops, building of forts, etc., and to draw on the treasury of Great Britain for the expense, which was afterwards to be refunded by an act of Parliament laying a tax on America. My

plan, with my reasons in support of it, is to be found among my political papers that are printed.\*

Being the winter following in Boston, I had much conversation with Governor Shirley upon both the plans. Part of what passed between us on the occasion may also be seen among those papers. The different and contrary reasons of dislike to my plan makes me suspect that it was really the true medium; and I am still of opinion it would have been happy for both sides the water if it had been adopted. The colonies, so united, would have been sufficiently strong to have defended themselves; there would then have been no need of troops from England; of course, the subsequent pretence for taxing America, and the bloody contest it occasioned, would have been avoided. But such mistakes are not new: history is full of the errors of states and princes.

“Look round the habitable world, how few  
Know their own good, or, knowing it, pursue it”

Those who govern, having much business on their hands, do not generally like to take the trouble of considering and carrying into execution new projects. The best public measures are therefore seldom *adopted from previous wisdom, but forc'd by the occasion.*

The Governor of Pennsylvania, in sending it down to the Assembly, express'd his approbation

---

\* See *Sparks' Works of Franklin*, vol. iii. pp. 22-55.—ED.



of the plan, "as appearing to him to be drawn up with great clearness and strength of judgment, and therefore recommended it as well worthy of their closest and most serious attention." The House, however, by the management of a certain member, took it up when I happen'd to be absent, which I thought not very fair, and reprobated it without paying any attention to it at all, to my no small mortification.

In my journey to Boston this year, I met at New York with our new governor, Mr. Morris, just arriv'd there from England, with whom I had been before intimately acquainted. He brought a commission to supersede Mr. Hamilton, who, tir'd with the disputes his proprietary instructions subjected him to, had resign'd. Mr. Morris ask'd me if I thought he must expect as uncomfortable an administration. I said, "No; you may, on the contrary, have a very comfortable one, if you will only take care not to enter into any dispute with the Assembly." "My dear friend," says he, pleasantly, "how can you advise my avoiding disputes? You know I love disputing; it is one of my greatest pleasures; however, to show the regard I have for your counsel, I promise you I will, if possible, avoid them." He had some reason for loving to dispute, being eloquent, an acute sophister, and, therefore, generally successful in argumentative conversation. He had been brought up to it from a boy, his father, as I have heard, accustoming his children to dispute

with one another for his diversion, while sitting at table after dinner; but I think the practice was not wise; for, in the course of my observation, these disputing, contradicting, and confuting people are generally unfortunate in their affairs. They get victory sometimes, but they never get good will, which would be of more use to them. We parted, he going to Philadelphia, and I to Boston.

In returning, I met at New York with the votes of the Assembly, by which it appear'd that, notwithstanding his promise to me, he and the House were already in high contention; and it was a continual battle between them as long as he retain'd the government. I had my share of it; for, as soon as I got back to my seat in the Assembly, I was put on every committee for answering his speeches and messages, and by the committees always desired to make the drafts. Our answers, as well as his messages, were often tart, and sometimes indecently abusive; and, as he knew I wrote for the Assembly, one might have imagined that, when we met, we could hardly avoid cutting throats; but he was so good-natur'd a man that no personal difference between him and me was occasion'd by the contest, and we often din'd together.

One afternoon, in the height of this public quarrel, we met in the street. "Franklin," says he, "you must go home with me and spend the evening; I am to have some company that you will like;" and, taking me by the arm, he led me to his

house. In gay conversation over our wine, after supper, he told us, jokingly, that he much admir'd the idea of Sancho Panza, who, when it was proposed to give him a government, requested it might be a government of *blacks*, as then, if he could not agree with his people, he might sell them. One of his friends, who sat next to me, says, "Franklin, why do you continue to side with these damn'd Quakers? Had not you better sell them? The proprietor would give you a good price." "The governor," says I, "has not yet *blackened* them enough." He, indeed, had labored hard to blacken the Assembly in all his messages, but they wip'd off his coloring as fast as he laid it on, and plac'd it, in return, thick upon his own face; so that, finding he was likely to be negrofied himself, he, as well as Mr. Hamilton, grew tir'd of the contest, and quitted the government.

\* These public quarrels were all at bottom owing to the proprietaries, our hereditary governors, who, when any expense was to be incurred for the defense of their province, with incredible meanness instructed their deputies to pass no act for levying the necessary taxes, unless their vast estates were in the same act expressly excused; and they had even taken bonds of these deputies to observe such instructions. The Assemblies for three years held out against this injustice, tho' constrained to

---

\* My acts in Morris's time, military, etc.—[*Marg. note.*]

bend at last. At length Captain Denny, who was Governor Morris's successor, ventured to disobey those instructions: how that was brought about I shall show hereafter.

But I am got forward too fast with my story: there are still some transactions to be mention'd that happened during the administration of Governor Morris.

War being in a manner commenced with France, the government of Massachusetts Bay projected an attack upon Crown Point, and sent Mr. Quincy to Pennsylvania, and Mr. Pownall, afterward Governor Pownall, to New York, to solicit assistance. As I was in the Assembly, knew its temper, and was Mr. Quincy's countryman, he appli'd to me for my influence and assistance. I dictated his address to them, which was well receiv'd. They voted an aid of ten thousand pounds, to be laid out in provisions. But the governor refusing his assent to their bill (which included this with other sums granted for the use of the crown), unless a clause were inserted exempting the proprietary estate from bearing any part of the tax that would be necessary, the Assembly, tho' very desirous of making their grant to New England effectual, were at a loss how to accomplish it. Mr. Quincy labored hard with the governor to obtain his assent, but he was obstinate.

I then suggested a method of doing the business without the governor, by orders on the trustees of the Loan Office, which, by law, the Assembly had

the right of drawing. There was, indeed, little or no money at that time in the office, and therefore I propos'd that the orders should be payable in a year, and to bear an interest of five per cent. With these orders I suppos'd the provisions might easily be purchas'd. The Assembly, with very little hesitation, adopted the proposal. The orders were immediately printed, and I was one of the committee directed to sign and dispose of them. The fund for paying them was the interest of all the paper currency then extant in the province upon loan, together with the revenue arising from the excise, which being known to be more than sufficient, they obtain'd instant credit, and were not only receiv'd in payment for the provisions, but many money'd people, who had cash lying by them, vested it in those orders, which they found advantageous, as they bore interest while upon hand, and might on any occasion be used as money; so that they were eagerly all bought up, and in a few weeks none of them were to be seen. Thus this important affair was by my means compleated. Mr. Quincy return'd thanks to the Assembly in a handsome memorial, went home highly pleas'd with the success of his embassy, and ever after bore for me the most cordial and affectionate friendship.

The British government, not chusing to permit the union of the colonies as propos'd at Albany, and to trust that union with their defense, lest they should thereby grow too military, and feel their own

strength, suspicions and jealousies at this time being entertain'd of them, sent over General Braddock with two regiments of regular English troops for that purpose. He landed at Alexandria, in Virginia, and thence march'd to Frederictown, in Maryland, where he halted for carriages. Our Assembly apprehending, from some information, that he had conceived violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wish'd me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as postmaster-general, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the despatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom he must necessarily have continual correspondence, and of which they propos'd to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

We found the general at Frederictown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent thro' the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect waggons. I stayed with him several days, din'd with him daily, and had full opportunity of removing all his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of waggons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appear'd that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The general and all the officers were surpris'd, declar'd

the expedition was then at an end, being impossible, and exclaim'd against the ministers for ignorantly landing them in a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, etc., not less than one hundred and fifty waggons being necessary.

I happen'd to say I thought it was pity they had not been landed rather in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had his waggon. The general eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, "Then you, sir, who are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us; and I beg you will undertake it." I ask'd what terms were to be offer'd the owners of the waggons; and I was desir'd to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepar'd immediately. What those terms were will appear in the advertisement I publish'd as soon as I arriv'd at Lancaster, which being, from the great and sudden effect it produc'd, a piece of some curiosity, I shall insert it at length, as follows:

"ADVERTISEMENT.

"LANCASTER, *April 26, 1755.*

"Whereas, one hundred and fifty waggons, with four horses to each waggon, and fifteen hundred saddle or pack horses, are wanted for the service of his majesty's forces now about to rendezvous at Will's Creek, and his excellency General Braddock having been pleased to empower me to contract for the hire

of the same, I hereby give notice that I shall attend for that purpose at Lancaster from this day to next Wednesday evening, and at York from next Thursday morning till Friday evening, where I shall be ready to agree for waggons and teams, or single horses, on the following terms, viz. : 1. That there shall be paid for each waggon, with four good horses and a driver, fifteen shillings per diem ; and for each able horse with a pack-saddle, or other saddle and furniture, two shillings per diem ; and for each able horse without a saddle, eighteen pence per diem. 2. That the pay commence from the time of their joining the forces at Will's Creek, which must be on or before the 20th of May ensuing, and that a reasonable allowance be paid over and above for the time necessary for their travelling to Will's Creek and home again after their discharge. 3. Each waggon and team, and every saddle or pack horse, is to be valued by indifferent persons chosen between me and the owner ; and in case of the loss of any waggon, team, or other horse in the service, the price according to such valuation is to be allowed and paid. 4. Seven days' pay is to be advanced and paid in hand by me to the owner of each waggon and team, or horse, at the time of contracting, if required, and the remainder to be paid by General Braddock, or by the paymaster of the army, at the time of their discharge, or from time to time, as it shall be demanded. 5. No drivers of waggons, or persons taking care of the hired horses, are on any



account to be called upon to do the duty of soldiers, or be otherwise employed than in conducting or taking care of their carriages or horses. 6. All oats, Indian corn, or other forage that waggon or horses bring to the camp, more than is necessary for the subsistence of the horses, is to be taken for the use of the army, and a reasonable price paid for the same.

“Note.—My son, William Franklin, is empowered to enter into like contracts with any person in Cumberland county.

B. FRANKLIN.”

*“To the inhabitants of the Counties of Lancaster, York, and Cumberland.*

“Friends and Countrymen,

“Being occasionally at the camp at Frederic a few days since, I found the general and officers extremely exasperated on account of their not being supplied with horses and carriages, which had been expected from this province, as most able to furnish them; but, through the dissensions between our governor and Assembly, money had not been provided, nor any steps taken for that purpose.

“It was proposed to send an armed force immediately into these counties, to seize as many of the best carriages and horses as should be wanted, and compel as many persons into the service as would be necessary to drive and take care of them.

“I apprehended that the progress of British soldiers through these counties on such an occasion,

especially considering the temper they are in, and their resentment against us, would be attended with many and great inconveniences to the inhabitants, and therefore more willingly took the trouble of trying first what might be done by fair and equitable means. The people of these back counties have lately complained to the Assembly that a sufficient currency was wanting ; you have an opportunity of receiving and dividing among you a very considerable sum ; for, if the service of this expedition should continue, as it is more than probable it will, for one hundred and twenty days, the hire of these waggons and horses will amount to upward of thirty thousand pounds, which will be paid you in silver and gold of the king's money.

“The service will be light and easy, for the army will scarce march above twelve miles per day, and the waggons and baggage-horses, as they carry those things that are absolutely necessary to the welfare of the army, must march with the army, and no faster ; and are, for the army's sake, always placed where they can be most secure, whether in a march or in a camp.

“If you are really, as I believe you are, good and loyal subjects to his majesty, you may now do a most acceptable service, and make it easy to yourselves ; for three or four of such as can not separately spare from the business of their plantations a waggon and four horses and a driver, may do it together, one furnishing the waggon, another one or

two horses, and another the driver, and divide the pay proportionably between you; but if you do not this service to your king and country voluntarily, when such good pay and reasonable terms are offered to you, your loyalty will be strongly suspected. The king's business must be done; so many brave troops, come so far for your defense, must not stand idle through your backwardness to do what may be reasonably expected from you; waggon and horses must be had; violent measures will probably be used, and you will be left to seek for a recompense where you can find it, and your case, perhaps, be little pitied or regarded.

"I have no particular interest in this affair, as, except the satisfaction of endeavoring to do good, I shall have only my labor for my pains. If this method of obtaining the waggon and horses is not likely to succeed, I am obliged to send word to the general in fourteen days; and I suppose Sir John St. Clair, the hussar, with a body of soldiers, will immediately enter the province for the purpose, which I shall be sorry to hear, because I am very sincerely and truly your friend and well-wisher,

"B. FRANKLIN."

I received of the general about eight hundred pounds, to be disbursed in advance-money to the waggon owners, etc.; but that sum being insufficient, I advanc'd upward of two hundred pounds more, and in two weeks the one hundred and fifty

waggon, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying horses, were on their march for the camp. The advertisement promised payment according to the valuation, in case any waggon or horse should be lost. The owners, however, alleging they did not know General Braddock, or what dependence might be had on his promise, insisted on my bond for the performance, which I accordingly gave them.

While I was at the camp, supping one evening with the officers of Colonel Dunbar's regiment, he represented to me his concern for the subalterns, who, he said, were generally not in affluence, and could ill afford, in this dear country, to lay in the stores that might be necessary in so long a march, thro' a wilderness, where nothing was to be purchas'd. I commiserated their case, and resolved to endeavor procuring them some relief. I said nothing, however, to him of my intention, but wrote the next morning to the committee of the Assembly, who had the disposition of some public money, warmly recommending the case of these officers to their consideration, and proposing that a present should be sent them of necessaries and refreshments. My son, who had some experience of a camp life, and of its wants, drew up a list for me, which I enclos'd in my letter. The committee approv'd, and used such diligence that, conducted by my son, the stores arrived at the camp as soon as the waggons. They consisted of twenty parcels, each containing

6 lbs. loaf sugar.	1 Gloucester cheese.
6 lbs. good Muscovado do.	1 kegg containing 20 lbs. good butter.
1 lb. good green tea.	2 doz. old Madeira wine.
1 lb. good bohea do.	2 gallons Jamaica spirits.
6 lbs. good ground coffee.	1 bottle flour of mustard.
6 lbs. chocolate.	2 well-cur'd hams.
1-2 cwt. best white biscuit.	1-2 dozen dry'd tongues.
1-2 lb. pepper.	6 lbs. rice.
1 quart best white wine vinegar.	6 lbs. raisins.

These twenty parcels, well pack'd, were placed on as many horses, each parcel, with the horse, being intended as a present for one officer. They were very thankfully receiv'd, and the kindness acknowledged by letters to me from the colonels of both regiments, in the most grateful terms. The general, too, was highly satisfied with my conduct in procuring him the waggons, etc., and readily paid my account of disbursements, thanking me repeatedly, and requesting my farther assistance in sending provisions after him. I undertook this also, and was busily employ'd in it till we heard of his defeat, advancing for the service of my own money, upwards of one thousand pounds sterling, of which I sent him an account. It came to his hands, luckily for me, a few days before the battle, and he return'd me immediately an order on the paymaster for the round sum of one thousand pounds, leaving the remainder to the next account. I consider this payment as good luck, having never been able to obtain that remainder, of which more hereafter.

This general was, I think, a brave man, and might probably have made a figure as a good officer

in some European war. But he had too much self-confidence, too high an opinion of the validity of regular troops, and too mean a one of both Americans and Indians. George Croghan, our Indian interpreter, join'd him on his march with one hundred of those people, who might have been of great use to his army as guides, scouts, etc., if he had treated them kindly ; but he slighted and neglected them, and they gradually left him.

In conversation with him one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. "After taking Fort Duquesne," says he, "I am to proceed to Niagara ; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time ; and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days ; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara." Having before revolv'd in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them thro' the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Iroquois country, I had conceiv'd some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign. But I ventur'd only to say, "To be sure, sir, if you arrive well before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, that place not yet compleatly fortified, and as we hear with no very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from am-

buscades of Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attack'd by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, can not come up in time to support each other."

He smil'd at my ignorance, and reply'd, "These savages may, indeed, be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the king's regular and disciplin'd troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression." I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more. The enemy, however, did not take the advantage of his army which I apprehended its long line of march expos'd it to, but let it advance without interruption till within nine miles of the place; and then, when more in a body (for it had just passed a river, where the front had halted till all were come over), and in a more open part of the woods than any it had pass'd, attack'd its advanced guard by a heavy fire from behind trees and bushes, which was the first intelligence the general had of an enemy's being near him. This guard being disordered, the general hurried the troops up to their assistance, which was done in great confusion, thro' waggons, baggage, and cattle; and presently the fire came upon their flank: the officers, being on horseback, were more easily distinguish'd, pick'd out as marks, and fell

very fast ; and the soldiers were crowded together in a huddle, having or hearing no orders, and standing to be shot at till two-thirds of them were killed ; and then, being seiz'd with a panick, the whole fled with precipitation.

The waggoners took each a horse out of his team and scamper'd ; their example was immediately followed by others ; so that all the waggons, provisions, artillery, and stores were left to the enemy. The general, being wounded, was brought off with difficulty ; his secretary, Mr. Shirley, was killed by his side ; and out of eighty-six officers, sixty-three were killed or wounded, and seven hundred and fourteen men killed out of eleven hundred. These eleven hundred had been picked men from the whole army ; the rest had been left behind with Colonel Dunbar, who was to follow with the heavier part of the stores, provisions, and baggage. The flyers, not being pursu'd, arriv'd at Dunbar's camp, and the panick they brought with them instantly seiz'd him and all his people ; and, tho' he had now above one thousand men, and the enemy who had beaten Braddock did not at most exceed four hundred Indians and French together, instead of proceeding, and endeavoring to recover some of the lost honour, he ordered all the stores, ammunition, etc., to be destroy'd, that he might have more horses to assist his flight towards the settlements, and less lumber to remove. He was there met with requests from the governors of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania,



that he would post his troops on the frontiers, so as to afford some protection to the inhabitants; but he continu'd his hasty march thro' all the country, not thinking himself safe till he arriv'd at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him. This whole transaction gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded.

In their first march, too, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, they had plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing, and confining the people if they remonstrated. This was enough to put us out of conceit of such defenders, if we had really wanted any. How different was the conduct of our French friends in 1781, who, during a march thro' the most inhabited part of our country from Rhode Island to Virginia, near seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple.

Captain Orme, who was one of the general's aids-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continu'd with him to his death, which happen'd in a few days, told me that he was totally silent all the first day, and at night only said, "*Who would have thought it?*" That he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, "*We shall better know how to deal with them another time;*" and dy'd in a few minutes after.

The secretary's papers, with all the general's orders, instructions, and correspondence, falling into the enemy's hands, they selected and translated into French a number of the articles, which they printed, to prove the hostile intentions of the British court before the declaration of war. Among these I saw some letters of the general to the ministry, speaking highly of the great service I had rendered the army, and recommending me to their notice. David Hume, too, who was some years after secretary to Lord Hertford, when minister in France, and afterward to General Conway, when secretary of state, told me he had seen among the papers in that office, letters from Braddock highly recommending me. But, the expedition having been unfortunate, my service, it seems, was not thought of much value, for those recommendations were never of any use to me.

As to rewards from himself, I ask'd only one, which was, that he would give orders to his officers not to enlist any more of our bought servants, and that he would discharge such as had been already enlisted. This he readily granted, and several were accordingly return'd to their masters, on my application. Dunbar, when the command devolv'd on him, was not so generous. He being at Philadelphia, on his retreat, or rather flight, I apply'd to him for the discharge of the servants of three poor farmers of Lancaster county that he had enlisted, reminding him of the late general's orders on that head. He promised me that, if the masters would come to him

at Trenton, where he should be in a few days on his march to New York, he would there deliver their men to them. They accordingly were at the expense and trouble of going to Trenton, and there he refus'd to perform his promise, to their great loss and disappointment.

As soon as the loss of the waggons and horses was generally known, all the owners came upon me for the valuation which I had given bond to pay. Their demands gave me a great deal of trouble, my acquainting them that the money was ready in the paymaster's hands, but that orders for paying it must first be obtained from General Shirley, and my assuring them that I had apply'd to that general by letter ; but, he being at a distance, an answer could not soon be receiv'd, and they must have patience, all this was not sufficient to satisfy, and some began to sue me. General Shirley at length relieved me from this terrible situation by appointing commissioners to examine the claims, and ordering payment. They amounted to near twenty thousand pound, which to pay would have ruined me.

Before we had the news of this defeat, the two Doctors Bond came to me with a subscription paper for raising money to defray the expense of a grand firework, which it was intended to exhibit at a rejoicing on receipt of the news of our taking Fort Duquesne. I looked grave, and said it would, I thought, be time enough to prepare for the rejoicing when we knew we should have occasion to rejoice.

They seem'd surpris'd that I did not immediately comply with their proposal. "Why the d—l!" says one of them, "you surely don't suppose that the fort will not be taken?" "I don't know that it will not be taken, but I know that the events of war are subject to great uncertainty." I gave them the reasons of my doubting; the subscription was dropt, and the projectors thereby missed the mortification they would have undergone if the firework had been prepared. Dr. Bond, on some other occasion afterward, said that he did not like Franklin's forebodings.

Governor Morris, who had continually worried the Assembly with message after message before the defeat of Braddock, to beat them into the making of acts to raise money for the defense of the province, without taxing, among others, the proprietary estates, and had rejected all their bills for not having such an exempting clause, now redoubled his attacks with more hope of success, the danger and necessity being greater. The Assembly, however, continu'd firm, believing they had justice on their side, and that it would be giving up an essential right if they suffered the governor to amend their money-bills. In one of the last, indeed, which was for granting fifty thousand pounds, his propos'd amendment was only of a single word. The bill express'd "that all estates, real and personal, were to be taxed, those of the proprietaries *not* excepted." His amendment was, for *not* read *only*: a small, but very material

alteration. However, when the news of this disaster reached England, our friends there, whom we had taken care to furnish with all the Assembly's answers to the governor's messages, rais'd a clamor against the proprietaries for their meanness and injustice in giving their governor such instructions; some going so far as to say that, by obstructing the defense of their province, they forfeited their right to it. They were intimidated by this, and sent orders to their receiver-general to add five thousand pounds of their money to whatever sum might be given by the Assembly for such purpose.

This, being notified to the House, was accepted in lieu of their share of a general tax, and a new bill was form'd, with an exempting clause, which passed accordingly. By this act I was appointed one of the commissioners for disposing of the money, sixty thousand pounds. I had been active in modelling the bill and procuring its passage, and had, at the same time, drawn a bill for establishing and disciplining a voluntary militia, which I carried thro' the House without much difficulty, as care was taken in it to leave the Quakers at their liberty. To promote the association necessary to form the militia, I wrote a dialogue,\* stating and answering all the objections I could think of to such a militia, which was printed, and had, as I thought, great effect.

---

\* This dialogue and the militia act are in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February and March, 1756.—[*Marg. note.*]

While the several companies in the city and country were forming, and learning their exercise, the governor prevail'd with me to take charge of our North-western frontier, which was infested by the enemy, and provide for the defense of the inhabitants by raising troops and building a line of forts. I undertook this military business, tho' I did not conceive myself well qualified for it. He gave me a commission with full powers, and a parcel of blank commissions for officers, to be given to whom I thought fit. I had but little difficulty in raising men, having soon five hundred and sixty under my command. My son, who had in the preceding war been an officer in the army rais'd against Canada, was my aid-de-camp, and of great use to me. The Indians had burned Gnadenhut, a village settled by the Moravians, and massacred the inhabitants ; but the place was thought a good situation for one of the forts.

In order to march thither, I assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief establishment of those people. I was surprised to find it in so good a posture of defense ; the destruction of Gnadenhut had made them apprehend danger. The principal buildings were defended by a stockade ; they had purchased a quantity of arms and ammunition from New York, and had ever plac'd quantities of small paving stones between the windows of their high stone houses, for their women to throw down upon the heads of any Indians that should attempt to

force into them. The armed brethren, too, kept watch, and reliev'd as methodically as in any garrison town. In conversation with the bishop, Spangenberg, I mention'd this my surprise; for, knowing they had obtained an act of Parliament exempting them from military duties in the colonies, I had suppos'd they were conscientiously scrupulous of bearing arms. He answer'd me that it was not one of their established principles, but that, at the time of their obtaining that act, it was thought to be a principle with many of their people. On this occasion, however, they, to their surprise, found it adopted by but a few. It seems they were either deceiv'd in themselves, or deceiv'd the Parliament; but common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions.

It was the beginning of January when we set out upon this business of building forts. I sent one detachment toward the Minisink, with instructions to erect one for the security of that upper part of the country, and another to the lower part, with similar instructions; and I concluded to go myself with the rest of my force to Gnadenhut, where a fort was tho't more immediately necessary. The Moravians procur'd me five waggons for our tools, stores, baggage, etc.

Just before we left Bethlehem, eleven farmers, who had been driven from their plantations by the Indians, came to me requesting a supply of firearms, that they might go back and fetch off their cattle.

I gave them each a gun with suitable ammunition. We had not march'd many miles before it began to rain, and it continued raining all day ; there were no habitations on the road to shelter us, till we arriv'd near night at the house of a German, where, and in his barn, we were all huddled together, as wet as water could make us. It was well we were not attack'd in our march, for our arms were of the most ordinary sort, and our men could not keep their gun locks dry. The Indians are dextrous in contrivances for that purpose, which we had not. They met that day the eleven poor farmers above mentioned, and killed ten of them. The one who escap'd inform'd that his and his companions' guns would not go off, the priming being wet with the rain.

The next day being fair, we continu'd our march, and arriv'd at the desolated Gnadenhut. There was a saw-mill near, round which were left several piles of boards, with which we soon huted ourselves ; an operation the more necessary at that inclement season, as we had no tents. Our first work was to bury more effectually the dead we found there, who had been half interr'd by the country people.

The next morning our fort was plann'd and mark'd out, the circumference measuring four hundred and fifty-five feet, which would require as many palisades to be made of trees, one with another, of a foot diameter each. Our axes, of which we had seventy, were immediately set to work to cut down trees,



and, our men being dextrous in the use of them, great despatch was made. Seeing the trees fall so fast, I had the curiosity to look at my watch when two men began to cut at a pine ; in six minutes they had it upon the ground, and I found it of fourteen inches diameter. Each pine made three palisades of eighteen feet long, pointed at one end. While these were preparing, our other men dug a trench all round, of three feet deep, in which the palisades were to be planted ; and, our waggons, the bodys being taken off, and the fore and hind wheels separated by taking out the pin which united the two parts of the perch, we had ten carriages, with two horses each, to bring the palisades from the woods to the spot. When they were set up, our carpenters built a stage of boards all round within, about six feet high, for the men to stand on when to fire thro' the loopholes. We had one swivel gun, which we mounted on one of the angles, and fir'd it as soon as fix'd, to let the Indians know, if any were within hearing, that we had such pieces ; and thus our fort, if such a magnificent name may be given to so miserable a stockade, was finish'd in a week, though it rain'd so hard every other day that the men could not work.

This gave me occasion to observe, that, when men are employ'd, they are best content'd ; for on the days they worked they were good-natur'd and cheerful, and, with the consciousness of having done a good day's work, they spent the evening jollily ;

but on our idle days they were mutinous and quarrelsome, finding fault with their pork, the bread, etc., and in continual ill-humor, which put me in mind of a sea-captain, whose rule it was to keep his men constantly at work; and, when his mate once told him that they had done every thing, and there was nothing further to employ them about, "*Oh,*" says he, "*make them scour the anchor.*"

This kind of fort, however contemptible, is a sufficient defense against Indians, who have no cannon. Finding ourselves now posted securely, and having a place to retreat to on occasion, we ventur'd out in parties to scour the adjacent country. We met with no Indians, but we found the places on the neighboring hills where they had lain to watch our proceedings. There was an art in their contrivance of those places that seems worth mention. It being winter, a fire was necessary for them; but a common fire on the surface of the ground would by its light have discover'd their position at a distance. They had therefore dug holes in the ground about three feet diameter, and somewhat deeper; we saw where they had with their hatchets cut off the charcoal from the sides of burnt logs lying in the woods. With these coals they had made small fires in the bottom of the holes, and we observ'd among the weeds and grass the prints of their bodies, made by their laying all round, with their legs hanging down in the holes to keep their feet warm, which, with them, is an essential point. This kind of fire, so

manag'd, could not discover them, either by its light, flame, sparks, or even smoke : it appear'd that their number was not great, and it seems they saw we were too many to be attacked by them with prospect of advantage.

We had for our chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to me that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually serv'd out to them, half in the morning, and the other half in the evening ; and I observ'd they were as punctual in attending to receive it ; upon which I said to Mr. Beatty, " It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out and only just after prayers, you would have them all about you." He liked the tho't, undertook the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended ; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

I had hardly finish'd this business, and got my fort well stor'd with provisions, when I receiv'd a letter from the governor, acquainting me that he had call'd the Assembly, and wished my attendance there, if the posture of affairs on the frontiers was such that my remaining there was no longer neces-

sary. My friends, too, of the Assembly, pressing me by their letters to be, if possible, at the meeting, and my three intended forts being now compleated, and the inhabitants contented to remain on their farms under that protection, I resolved to return; the more willingly, as a New England officer, Colonel Clapham, experienced in Indian war, being on a visit to our establishment, consented to accept the command. I gave him a commission, and, parading the garrison, had it read before them, and introduc'd him to them as an officer who, from his skill in military affairs, was much more fit to command them than myself; and, giving them a little exhortation, took my leave. I was escorted as far as Bethlehem, where I rested a few days to recover from the fatigue I had undergone. The first night, being in a good bed, I could hardly sleep, it was so different from my hard lodging on the floor of our hut at Gnaden wrapt only in a blanket or two.

While at Bethlehem, I inquir'd a little into the practice of the Moravians: some of them had accompanied me, and all were very kind to me. I found they work'd for a common stock, eat at common tables, and slept in common dormitories, great numbers together. In the dormitories I observed loopholes, at certain distances all along just under the ceiling, which I thought judiciously placed for change of air. I was at their church, where I was entertain'd with good musick, the

organ being accompanied with violins, hautboys, flutes, clarinets, etc. I understood that their sermons were not usually preached to mixed congregations of men, women, and children, as is our common practice, but that they assembled sometimes the married men, at other times their wives, then the young men, the young women, and the little children, each division by itself. The sermon I heard was to the latter, who came in and were plac'd in rows on benches; the boys under the conduct of a young man, their tutor, and the girls conducted by a young woman. The discourse seem'd well adapted to their capacities, and was delivered in a pleasing, familiar manner, coaxing them, as it were, to be good. They behav'd very orderly, but looked pale and unhealthy, which made me suspect they were kept too much within doors, or not allow'd sufficient exercise.

I inquir'd concerning the Moravian marriages, whether the report was true that they were by lot. I was told that lots were us'd only in particular cases; that generally, when a young man found himself dispos'd to marry, he inform'd the elders of his class, who consulted the elder ladies that govern'd the young women. As these elders of the different sexes were well acquainted with the tempers and dispositions of their respective pupils, they could best judge what matches were suitable, and their judgments were generally acquiesc'd in; but if, for example, it should happen that two or three

young women were found to be equally proper for the young man, the lot was then recurred to. I objected, if the matches are not made by the mutual choice of the parties, some of them may chance to be very unhappy. "And so they may," answer'd my informer, "if you let the parties chuse for themselves;" which, indeed, I could not deny.

Being returned to Philadelphia, I found the association went on swimmingly, the inhabitants that were not Quakers having pretty generally come into it, formed themselves into companies, and chose their captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, according to the new law. Dr. B. visited me, and gave me an account of the pains he had taken to spread a general good liking to the law, and ascribed much to those endeavors. I had had the vanity to ascribe all to my *Dialogue*; however, not knowing but that he might be in the right, I let him enjoy his opinion, which I take to be generally the best way in such cases. The officers, meeting, chose me to be colonel of the regiment, which I this time accepted. I forget how many companies we had, but we paraded about twelve hundred well-looking men, with a company of artillery, who had been furnished with six brass field-pieces, which they had become so expert in the use of as to fire twelve times in a minute. The first time I reviewed my regiment they accompanied me to my house, and would salute me with some rounds fired before my door, which shook down and broke several glasses of my elec-

trical apparatus. And my new honour proved not much less brittle ; for all our commissions were soon after broken by a repeal of the law in England.

During this short time of my colonelship, being about to set out on a journey to Virginia, the officers of my regiment took it into their heads that it would be proper for them to escort me out of town, as far as the Lower Ferry. Just as I was getting on horseback they came to my door, between thirty and forty, mounted, and all in their uniforms. I had not been previously acquainted with the project, or I should have prevented it, being naturally averse to the assuming of state on any occasion ; and I was a good deal chagrined at their appearance, as I could not avoid their accompanying me. What made it worse was, that, as soon as we began to move, they drew their swords and rode with them naked all the way. Somebody wrote an account of this to the proprietor, and it gave him great offense. No such honor had been paid him when in the province, nor to any of his governors ; and he said it was only proper to princes of the blood royal, which may be true for aught I know, who was, and still am, ignorant of the etiquette in such cases.

This silly affair, however, greatly increased his rancour against me, which was before not a little, on account of my conduct in the Assembly respecting the exemption of his estate from taxation, which I had always oppos'd very warmly, and not with-

out severe reflections on his meanness and injustice of contending for it. He accused me to the ministry as being the great obstacle to the king's service, preventing, by my influence in the House, the proper form of the bills for raising money, and he instanced this parade with my officers as a proof of my having an intention to take the government of the province out of his hands by force. He also applied to Sir Everard Fawkener, the postmaster-general, to deprive me of my office; but it had no other effect than to procure from Sir Everard a gentle admonition.

Notwithstanding the continual wrangle between the governor and the House, in which I, as a member, had so large a share, there still subsisted a civil intercourse between that gentleman and myself, and we never had any personal difference. I have sometimes since thought that his little or no resentment against me, for the answers it was known I drew up to his messages, might be the effect of professional habit, and that, being bred a lawyer, he might consider us both as merely advocates for contending clients in a suit, he for the proprietaries and I for the Assembly. He would, therefore, sometimes call in a friendly way to advise with me on difficult points, and sometimes, tho' not often, take my advice.

We acted in concert to supply Braddock's army with provisions; and, when the shocking news arrived of his defeat, the governor sent in haste for



me, to consult with him on measures for preventing the desertion of the back counties. I forget now the advice I gave; but I think it was, that Dunbar should be written to, and prevail'd with, if possible, to post his troops on the frontiers for their protection, till, by re-enforcements from the colonies, he might be able to proceed on the expedition. 'And, after my return from the frontier, he would have had me undertake the conduct of such an expedition with provincial troops, for the reduction of Fort Duquesne, Dunbar and his men being otherwise employed; and he proposed to commission me as general. I had not so good an opinion of my military abilities as he profess'd to have, and I believe his professions must have exceeded his real sentiments; but probably he might think that my popularity would facilitate the raising of the men, and my influence in Assembly, the grant of money to pay them, and that, perhaps, without taxing the proprietary estate. Finding me not so forward to engage as he expected, the project was dropt, and he soon after left the government, being superseded by Captain Denny.

Before I proceed in relating the part I had in public affairs under this new governor's administration, it may not be amiss here to give some account of the rise and progress of my philosophical reputation.

In 1746, being at Boston, I met there with a Dr. Spence, who was lately arrived from Scotland, and

show'd me some electric experiments. They were imperfectly perform'd, as he was not very expert; but, being on a subject quite new to me, they equally surpris'd and pleased me. Soon after my return to Philadelphia, our library company receiv'd from Mr. P. Collinson, Fellow of the Royal Society of London, a present of a glass tube, with some account of the use of it in making such experiments. I eagerly seized the opportunity of repeating what I had seen at Boston; and, by much practice, acquir'd great readiness in performing those, also, which we had an account of from England, adding a number of new ones. I say much practice, for my house was continually full, for some time, with people who came to see these new wonders.

To divide a little this incumbrance among my friends, I caused a number of similar tubes to be blown at our glass-house, with which they furnish'd themselves, so that we had at length several performers. Among these, the principal was Mr. Kinnersley, an ingenious neighbor, who, being out of business, I encouraged to undertake showing the experiments for money, and drew up for him two lectures, in which the experiments were rang'd in such order, and accompanied with such explanations in such method, as that the foregoing should assist in comprehending the following. He procur'd an elegant apparatus for the purpose, in which all the little machines that I had roughly made for myself were nicely form'd by instrument-makers. His

lectures were well attended, and gave great satisfaction; and after some time he went thro' the colonies, exhibiting them in every capital town, and pick'd up some money. In the West India islands, indeed, it was with difficulty the experiments could be made, from the general moisture of the air.

Oblig'd as we were to Mr. Collinson for his present of the tube, etc., I thought it right he should be inform'd of our success in using it, and wrote him several letters containing accounts of our experiments. He got them read in the Royal Society, where they were not at first thought worth so much notice as to be printed in their Transactions. One paper, which I wrote for Mr. Kinnersley, on the sameness of lightning with electricity, I sent to Dr. Mitchel, an acquaintance of mine, and one of the members also of that society, who wrote me word that it had been read, but was laughed at by the connoisseurs. The papers, however, being shown to Dr. Fothergill, he thought them of too much value to be stifled, and advis'd the printing of them. Mr. Collinson then gave them to *Cave* for publication in his Gentleman's Magazine; but he chose to print them separately in a pamphlet, and Dr. Fothergill wrote the preface. *Cave*, it seems, judged rightly for his profit, for by the additions that arrived afterward, they swell'd to a quarto volume, which has had five editions, and cost him nothing for copy-money.

It was, however, some time before those papers

were much taken notice of in England. A copy of them happening to fall into the hands of the Count de Buffon, a philosopher deservedly of great reputation in France, and, indeed, all over Europe, he prevailed with M. Dalibard to translate them into French, and they were printed at Paris. The publication offended the Abbé Nollet, preceptor in Natural Philosophy to the royal family, and an able experimenter, who had form'd and publish'd a theory of electricity, which then had the general vogue. He could not at first believe that such a work came from America, and said it must have been fabricated by his enemies at Paris, to decry his system. Afterwards, having been assur'd that there really existed such a person as Franklin at Philadelphia, which he had doubted, he wrote and published a volume of Letters, chiefly address'd to me, defending his theory, and denying the verity of my experiments, and of the positions deduc'd from them.

I once purpos'd answering the abbé, and actually began the answer; but, on consideration that my writings contain'd a description of experiments which any one might repeat and verify, and if not to be verifi'd, could not be defended; or of observations offer'd as conjectures, and not delivered dogmatically, therefore not laying me under any obligation to defend them; and reflecting that a dispute between two persons, writing in different languages, might be lengthened greatly by mistranslations, and

thence misconceptions of one another's meaning, much of one of the abbé's letters being founded on an error in the translation, I concluded to let my papers shift for themselves, believing it was better to spend what time I could spare from public business in making new experiments, than in disputing about those already made. I therefore never answered M. Nollet, and the event gave me no cause to repent my silence; for my friend M. le Roy, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, took up my cause and refuted him; my book was translated into the Italian, German, and Latin languages; and the doctrine it contain'd was by degrees universally adopted by the philosophers of Europe, in preference to that of the abbé; so that he lived to see himself the last of his sect, except Monsieur B——, of Paris, his *élève* and immediate disciple.

What gave my book the more sudden and general celebrity, was the success of one of its proposed experiments, made by Messrs. Dalibard and De Lor at Marly, for drawing lightning from the clouds. This engag'd the public attention every where. M. de Lor, who had an apparatus for experimental philosophy, and lectur'd in that branch of science, undertook to repeat what he called the *Philadelphia Experiments*; and, after they were performed before the king and court, all the curious of Paris flocked to see them. I will not swell this narrative with an account of that capital experiment, nor of the infinite pleasure I receiv'd in the success of a

similar one I made soon after with a kite at Philadelphia, as both are to be found in the histories of electricity.

Dr. Wright, an English physician, when at Paris, wrote to a friend, who was of the Royal Society, an account of the high esteem my experiments were in among the learned abroad, and of their wonder that my writings had been so little noticed in England. The society, on this, resum'd the consideration of the letters that had been read to them; and the celebrated Dr. Watson drew up a summary account of them, and of all I had afterwards sent to England on the subject, which he accompanied with some praise of the writer. This summary was then printed in their Transactions; and some members of the society in London, particularly the very ingenious Mr. Canton, having verified the experiment of procuring lightning from the clouds by a pointed rod, and acquainting them with the success, they soon made me more than amends for the slight with which they had before treated me. Without my having made any application for that honor, they chose me a member, and voted that I should be excus'd the customary payments, which would have amounted to twenty-five guineas; and ever since have given me their Transactions gratis.\* They also pre-

---

\* Dr. Franklin gives a further account of his election in a letter to his son, Governor Franklin, from which the following is an extract :

"LONDON, 19 December, 1767.

"We have had an ugly affair at the Royal Society lately. One

sented me with the gold medal of Sir Godfrey Copley for the year 1753, the delivery of which was accompanied by a very handsome speech\* of the president, Lord Macclesfield, wherein I was highly honoured.

Our new governor, Captain Denny, brought over

Dacosta, a Jew, who, as our clerk, was intrusted with collecting our moneys, has been so unfaithful as to embezzle near thirteen hundred pounds in four years. Being one of the Council this year, as well as the last, I have been employed all the last week in attending the inquiry into, and unravelling, his accounts, in order to come at a full knowledge of his frauds. His securities are bound in one thousand pounds to the Society, which they will pay, but we shall probably lose the rest. He had this year received twenty-six admission payments of twenty-five guineas each, which he did not bring to account.

"While attending to this affair, I had an opportunity of looking over the old Council books and journals of the Society, and, having a curiosity to see how I came in, of which I had never been informed, I looked back for the minutes relating to it. You must know, it is not usual to admit persons that have not requested to be admitted; and a recommendatory certificate in favor of the candidate, signed by at least three of the members, is by our rule to be presented to the Society, expressing that he is desirous of that honor, and is so and so qualified. As I never had asked or expected the honor, I was, as I said before, curious to see how the business was managed. I found that the certificate, worded very advantageously for me, was signed by Lord Macclesfield, then president, Lord Parker, and Lord Willoughby; that the election was by a unanimous vote; and, the honor being voluntarily conferred by the Society, unsolicited by me, it was thought wrong to demand or receive the usual fees or composition; so that my name was entered on the list, with a vote of Council that I was not to pay any thing, and accordingly nothing has ever been demanded of me. Those who are admitted in the common way, pay five guineas admission fees, and two guineas and a half yearly contribution, or twenty-five guineas down in lieu of it. In my case a substantial favor accompanied the honor."—W. T. F.

\* See this speech in vol. v. p. 499, *Sparks' Works of Franklin*.—ED.

for me the before-mentioned medal from the Royal Society, which he presented to me at an entertainment given him by the city. He accompanied it with very polite expressions of his esteem for me, having, as he said, been long acquainted with my character. After dinner, when the company, as was customary at that time, were engag'd in drinking, he took me aside into another room, and acquainted me that he had been advis'd by his friends in England to cultivate a friendship with me, as one who was capable of giving him the best advice, and of contributing most effectually to the making his administration easy ; that he therefore desired of all things to have a good understanding with me, and he begg'd me to be assur'd of his readiness on all occasions to render me every service that might be in his power. He said much to me, also, of the proprietor's good disposition towards the province, and of the advantage it might be to us all, and to me in particular, if the opposition that had been so long continu'd to his measures was dropt, and harmony restor'd between him and the people ; in effecting which, it was thought no one could be more serviceable than myself ; and I might depend on adequate acknowledgments and recompenses, etc., etc. The drinkers, finding we did not return immediately to the table, sent us a decanter of Madeira, which the governor made liberal use of, and in proportion became more profuse of his solicitations and promises.



My answers were to this purpose: that my circumstances, thanks to God, were such as to make proprietary favours unnecessary to me; and that, being a member of the Assembly, I could not possibly accept of any; that, however, I had no personal enmity to the proprietary, and that, whenever the public measures he propos'd should appear to be for the good of the people, no one should espouse and forward them more zealously than myself; my past opposition having been founded on this, that the measures which had been urged were evidently intended to serve the proprietary interest, with great prejudice to that of the people; that I was much obliged to him (the governor) for his professions of regard to me, and that he might rely on every thing in my power to make his administration as easy as possible, hoping at the same time that he had not brought with him the same unfortunate instruction his predecessor had been hamper'd with.

On this he did not then explain himself; but when he afterwards came to do business with the Assembly, they appear'd again, the disputes were renewed, and I was as active as ever in the opposition, being the penman, first, of the request to have a communication of the instructions, and then of the remarks upon them, which may be found in the votes of the time, and in the *Historical Review* I afterward publish'd. But between us personally no enmity arose; we were often together; he was a man of letters, had seen much of the world, and

was very entertaining and pleasing in conversation. He gave me the first information that my old friend Jas. Ralph was still alive ; that he was esteem'd one of the best political writers in England ; had been employ'd in the dispute between Prince Frederic and the king, and had obtain'd a pension of three hundred a year ; that his reputation was indeed small as a poet, Pope having damned his poetry in the Dunciad ; but his prose was thought as good as any man's.

\* The Assembly finally finding the proprietary obstinately persisted in manacling their deputies with instructions inconsistent not only with the privileges of the people, but with the service of the crown, resolv'd to petition the king against them, and appointed me their agent to go over to England, to present and support the petition. The House had sent up a bill to the governor, granting a sum of sixty thousand pounds for the king's use (ten thousand pounds of which was subjected to the orders of the then general, Lord Loudoun), which the governor absolutely refus'd to pass, in compliance with his instructions.

I had agreed with Captain Morris, of the packet at New York, for my passage, and my stores were put on board, when Lord Loudoun arriv'd at Philadelphia, expressly, as he told me, to endeavor an accommodation between the governor and Assem-

---

\* The many unanimous resolves of the Assembly—what date?—  
[*Marg. note.*]

bly, that his majesty's service might not be obstructed by their dissensions. Accordingly, he desir'd the governor and myself to meet him, that he might hear what was to be said on both sides. We met and discuss'd the business. In behalf of the Assembly, I urg'd all the various arguments that may be found in the public papers of that time, which were of my writing, and are printed with the minutes of the Assembly; and the governor pleaded his instructions; the bond he had given to observe them, and his ruin if he disobey'd, yet seemed not unwilling to hazard himself if Lord Loudoun would advise it. This his lordship did not chuse to do, though I once thought I had nearly prevail'd with him to do it; but finally he rather chose to urge the compliance of the Assembly; and he entreated me to use my endeavours with them for that purpore, declaring that he would spare none of the king's troops for the defense of our frontiers, and that, if we did not continue to provide for that defense ourselves, they must remain expos'd to the enemy.

I acquainted the House with what had pass'd, and, presenting them with a set of resolutions I had drawn up, declaring our rights, and that we did not relinquish our claim to those rights, but only suspended the exercise of them on this occasion thro' *force*, against which we protested, they at length agreed to drop that bill, and frame another conformable to the proprietary instructions. This of course the governor pass'd, and I was then at

liberty to proceed on my voyage. But, in the mean time, the paquet had sailed with my sea-stores, which was some loss to me, and my only recompense was his lordship's thanks for my service, all the credit of obtaining the accommodation falling to his share.

He set out for New York before me; and, as the time for dispatching the paquet-boats was at his disposition, and there were two then remaining there, one of which, he said, was to sail very soon, I requested to know the precise time, that I might not miss her by any delay of mine. His answer was, "I have given out that she is to sail on Saturday next; but I may let you know, *entre nous*, that if you are there by Monday morning, you will be in time, but do not delay longer." By some accidental hinderance at a ferry, it was Monday noon before I arrived, and I was much afraid she might have sailed, as the wind was fair; but I was soon made easy by the information that she was still in the harbor, and would not move till the next day. One would imagine that I was now on the very point of departing for Europe. I thought so; but I was not then so well acquainted with his lordship's character, of which *indecision* was one of the strongest features. I shall give some instances. It was about the beginning of April that I came to New York, and I think it was near the end of June before we sail'd. There were then two of the paquet-boats, which had been long in port, but were detained for

the general's letters, which were always to be ready to-morrow. Another paquet arriv'd; she too was detain'd; and, before we sail'd, a fourth was expected. Ours was the first to be dispatch'd, as having been there longest. Passengers were engag'd in all, and some extremely impatient to be gone, and the merchants uneasy about their letters, and the orders they had given for insurance (it being war time) for fall goods; but their anxiety avail'd nothing; his lordship's letters were not ready; and yet whoever waited on him found him always at his desk, pen in hand, and concluded he must needs write abundantly.

Going myself one morning to pay my respects, I found in his antechamber one Innis, a messenger of Philadelphia, who had come from thence express with a paquet from Governor Denny for the General. He delivered to me some letters from my friends there, which occasion'd my inquiring when he was to return, and where he lodg'd, that I might send some letters by him. He told me he was order'd to call to-morrow at nine for the general's answer to the governor, and should set off immediately. I put my letters into his hands the same day. A fortnight after I met him again in the same place. "So, you are soon return'd, Innis?" "*Return'd!* no, I am not *gone* yet." "How so?" "I have called here by order every morning these two weeks past for his lordship's letter, and it is not yet ready." "Is it possible, when he is so great a writer? for I see him

constantly at his escritoire." "Yes," says Innis, "but he is like St. George on the signs, *always on horseback, and never rides on.*" This observation of the messenger was, it seems, well founded; for, when in England, I understood that Mr. Pitt gave it as one reason for removing this general, and sending Generals Amherst and Wolfe, *that the minister never heard from him, and could not know what he was doing.*

This daily expectation of sailing, and all the three paquets going down to Sandy Hook, to join the fleet there, the passengers thought it best to be on board, lest by a sudden order the ships should sail, and they be left behind. There, if I remember right, we were about six weeks, consuming our sea-stores, and oblig'd to procure more. At length the fleet sail'd, the General and all his army on board, bound to Louisburg, with intent to besiege and take that fortress; all the paquet-boats in company ordered to attend the General's ship, ready to receive his dispatches when they should be ready. We were out five days before we got a letter with leave to part, and then our ship quitted the fleet and steered for England. The other two paquets he still detained, carried them with him to Halifax, where he stayed some time to exercise the men in sham attacks upon sham forts, then alter'd his mind as to besieging Louisburg, and return'd to New York, with all his troops, together with the two paquets above mentioned, and all their passengers! During his absence the French

and savages had taken Fort George, on the frontier of that province, and the savages had massacred many of the garrison after capitulation.

I saw afterwards in London Captain Bonnell, who commanded one of those paquets. He told me that, when he had been detain'd a month, he acquainted his lordship that his ship was grown foul, to a degree that must necessarily hinder her fast sailing, a point of consequence for a packet-boat, and requested an allowance of time to heave her down and clean her bottom. He was asked how long time that would require. He answer'd, three days. The general replied, "If you can do it in one day, I give leave; otherwise not; for you must certainly sail the day after to-morrow." So he never obtain'd leave, though detained afterwards from day to day during full three months.

I saw also in London one of Bonnell's passengers, who was so enrag'd against his lordship for deceiving and detaining him so long at New York, and then carrying him to Halifax and back again, that he swore he would sue him for damages. Whether he did or not, I never heard; but, as he represented the injury to his affairs, it was very considerable.

On the whole, I wonder'd much how such a man came to be intrusted with so important a business as the conduct of a great army; but, having since seen more of the great world, and the means of obtaining, and motives for giving places, my wonder is diminished. General Shirley,

on whom the command of the army devolved upon the death of Braddock, would, in my opinion, if continued in place, have made a much better campaign than that of Loudoun in 1757, which was frivolous, expensive, and disgraceful to our nation beyond conception; for, tho' Shirley was not a bred soldier, he was sensible and sagacious in himself, and attentive to good advice from others, capable of forming judicious plans, and quick and active in carrying them into execution. Loudoun, instead of defending the colonies with his great army, left them totally expos'd, while he paraded idly at Halifax, by which means Fort George was lost, besides, he derang'd all our mercantile operations, and distress'd our trade, by a long embargo on the exportation of provisions, on pretence of keeping supplies from being obtain'd by the enemy, but in reality for beating down their price in favor of the contractors, in whose profits, it was said, perhaps from suspicion only, he had a share. And, when at length the embargo was taken off, by neglecting to send notice of it to Charlestown, the Carolina fleet was detain'd near three months longer, whereby their bottoms were so much damaged by the worm that a great part of them foundered in their passage home.

Shirley was, I believe, sincerely glad of being relieved from so burdensome a charge as the conduct of an army must be to a man unacquainted with military business. I was at the entertainment given by the city of New York to Lord Loudoun, on his



taking upon him the command. Shirley, tho' thereby superseded, was present also. There was a great company of officers, citizens, and strangers, and, some chairs having been borrowed in the neighborhood, there was one among them very low, which fell to the lot of Mr. Shirley. Perceiving it as I sat by him, I said, "They have given you, sir, too low a seat." "No matter," says he, "Mr. Franklin, I find *a low seat* the easiest."

While I was, as afore mention'd, detain'd at New York, I receiv'd all the accounts of the provisions, etc., that I had furnish'd to Braddock, some of which accounts could not sooner be obtain'd from the different persons I had employ'd to assist in the business. I presented them to Lord Loudoun, desiring to be paid the ballance. He caus'd them to be regularly examined by the proper officer, who, after comparing every article with its voucher, certified them to be right; and the balance due for which his lordship promis'd to give me an order on the paymaster. This was, however, put off from time to time; and, tho' I call'd often for it by appointment, I did not get it. At length, just before my departure, he told me he had, on better consideration, concluded not to mix his accounts with those of his predecessors. "And you," says he, "when in England, have only to exhibit your accounts at the treasury, and you will be paid immediately."

I mention'd, but without effect, the great and unex-

pected expense I had been put to by being detain'd so long at New York, as a reason for my desiring to be presently paid ; and on my observing that it was not right I should be put to any further trouble or delay in obtaining the money I had advanc'd, as I charged no commission for my service, " O, sir," says he, " you must not think of persuading us that you are no gainer ; we understand better those affairs, and know that every one concerned in supplying the army finds means, in the doing it, to fill his own pockets." I assur'd him that was not my case, and that I had not pocketed a farthing ; but he appear'd clearly not to believe me ; and, indeed, I have since learnt that immense fortunes are often made in such employments. As to my ballance, I am not paid it to this day, of which more hereafter.

Our captain of the paquet had boasted much, before we sailed, of the swiftness of his ship ; unfortunately, when we came to sea, she proved the dullest of ninety-six sail, to his no small mortification. After many conjectures respecting the cause, when we were near another ship almost as dull as ours, which, however, gain'd upon us, the captain ordered all hands to come aft, and stand as near the ensign staff as possible. We were, passengers included, about forty persons. While we stood there, the ship mended her pace, and soon left her neighbour far behind, which prov'd clearly what our captain suspected, that she was loaded too much by the head. The casks of water, it seems, had been

all plac'd forward ; these he therefore order'd to be mov'd further aft, on which the ship recover'd her character, and proved the best sailer in the fleet.

The captain said she had once gone at the rate of thirteen knots, which is accounted thirteen miles per hour. We had on board, as a passenger, Captain Kennedy, of the Navy, who contended that it was impossible, and that no ship ever sailed so fast, and that there must have been some error in the division of the log-line, or some mistake in heaving the log. A wager ensu'd between the two captains, to be decided when there should be sufficient wind. Kennedy thereupon examin'd rigorously the log-line, and, being satisfi'd with that, he determin'd to throw the log himself. Accordingly some days after, when the wind blew very fair and fresh, and the captain of the paquet, Lutwidge, said he believ'd she then went at the rate of thirteen knots, Kennedy made the experiment, and own'd his wager lost.

The above fact I give for the sake of the following observation. It has been remark'd, as an imperfection in the art of ship-building, that it can never be known, till she is tried, whether a new ship will or will not be a good sailer ; for that the model of a good-sailing ship has been exactly follow'd in a new one, which has prov'd, on the contrary, remarkably dull. I apprehend that this may partly be occasion'd by the different opinions of seamen respecting the modes of lading, rigging,

and sailing of a ship ; each has his system ; and the same vessel, laden by the judgment and orders of one captain, shall sail better or worse than when by the orders of another. Besides, it scarce ever happens that a ship is form'd, fitted for the sea, and sail'd by the same person. One man builds the hull, another rigs her, a third lades and sails her. No one of these has the advantage of knowing all the ideas and experience of the others, and, therefore, can not draw just conclusions from a combination of the whole.

Even in the simple operation of sailing when at sea, I have often observ'd different judgments in the officers who commanded the successive watches, the wind being the same. One would have the sails trimm'd sharper or flatter than another, so that they seem'd to have no certain rule to govern by. Yet I think a set of experiments might be instituted, first, to determine the most proper form of the hull for swift sailing ; next, the best dimensions and properest place for the masts ; then the form and quantity of sails, and their position, as the wind may be ; and, lastly, the disposition of the lading. This is an age of experiments, and I think a set accurately made and combin'd would be of great use. I am persuaded, therefore, that ere long some ingenious philosopher will undertake it, to whom I wish success.

We were several times chas'd in our passage, but outsail'd every thing, and in thirty days had sound-

ings. We had a good observation, and the captain judg'd himself so near our port, Falmouth, that, if we made a good run in the night, we might be off the mouth of that harbor in the morning, and by running in the night might escape the notice of the enemy's privateers, who often cruis'd near the entrance of the channel. Accordingly, all the sail was set that we could possibly make, and the wind being very fresh and fair, we went right before it, and made great way. The captain, after his observation, shap'd his course, as he thought, so as to pass wide of the Scilly Isles; but it seems there is sometimes a strong indraught setting up St. George's Channel, which deceives seamen and caused the loss of Sir Cloudesley Shovel's squadron. This indraught was probably the cause of what happened to us.

We had a watchman plac'd in the bow, to whom they often called, "*Look well out before there,*" and he as often answered, "*Ay, ay;*" but perhaps had his eyes shut, and was half asleep at the time, they sometimes answering, as is said, mechanically; for he did not see a light just before us, which had been hid by the studding-sails from the man at the helm, and from the rest of the watch, but by an accidental yaw of the ship was discover'd, and occasion'd a great alarm, we being very near it, the light appearing to me as big as a cart-wheel. It was midnight, and our captain fast asleep; but Captain Kennedy, jumping upon deck, and seeing

the danger, ordered the ship to wear round, all sails standing ; an operation dangerous to the masts, but it carried us clear, and we escaped shipwreck, for we were running right upon the rocks on which the light-house was erected. This deliverance impressed me strongly with the utility of light-houses, and made me resolve to encourage the building more of them in America, if I should live to return there.

In the morning it was found by the soundings, etc., that we were near our port, but a thick fog hid the land from our sight. About nine o'clock the fog began to rise, and seem'd to be lifted up from the water like the curtain at a play-house, discovering underneath, the town of Falmouth, the vessels in its harbor, and the fields that surrounded it. This was a most pleasing spectacle to those who had been so long without any other prospects than the uniform view of a vacant ocean, and it gave us the more pleasure as we were now free from the anxieties which the state of war occasion'd.

I set out immediately, with my son, for London, and we only stopt a little by the way to view Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, and Lord Pembroke's house and gardens, with his very curious antiquities at Wilton. We arrived in London the 27th of July, 1757.\*

---

\* Here terminates the Autobiography, as published by Wm. Temple Franklin and his successors. What follows was written the last year of Dr. Franklin's life, and was never before printed in English.—ED.

AS soon as I was settled in a lodging Mr. Charles had provided for me, I went to visit Dr. Fothergill, to whom I was strongly recommended, and whose counsel respecting my proceedings I was advis'd to obtain. He was against an immediate complaint to government, and thought the proprietaries should first be personally appli'd to, who might possibly be induc'd by the interposition and persuasion of some private friends, to accommodate matters amicably. I then waited on my old friend and correspondent, Mr. Peter Collinson, who told me that John Hanbury, the great Virginia merchant, had requested to be informed when I should arrive, that he might carry me to Lord Granville's, who was then President of the Council and wished to see me as soon as possible. I agreed to go with him the next morning. Accordingly Mr. Hanbury called

for me and took me in his carriage to that nobleman's, who receiv'd me with great civility; and after some questions respecting the present state of affairs in America and discourse thereupon, he said to me: "You Americans have wrong ideas of the nature of your constitution; you contend that the king's instructions to his governors are not laws, and think yourselves at liberty to regard or disregard them at your own discretion. But those instructions are not like the pocket instructions given to a minister going abroad, for regulating his conduct in some trifling point of ceremony. They are first drawn up by judges learned in the laws; they are then considered, debated, and perhaps amended in Council, after which they are signed by the king. They are then, so far as they relate to you, the *law of the land*, for the king is the LEGISLATOR OF THE COLONIES." I told his lordship this was new doctrine to me. I had always understood from our charters that our laws were to be made by our Assemblies, to be presented indeed to the king for his royal assent, but that being once given the king could not repeal or alter them. And as the Assemblies could not make permanent laws without his assent, so neither could he make a law for them without theirs. He assur'd me I was totally mistaken. I did not think so, however, and his lordship's conversation having a little alarm'd me as to what might be the sentiments of the court concerning us, I wrote it down as soon as I return'd to my



lodgings.\* I recollected that about 20 years before, a clause in a bill brought into Parliament by the

---

\* An account of this conversation with Granville is given in the following letter from Franklin to Mr. James Bowdoin:

"LONDON, 13 *January*, 1772.

"DEAR SIR : I should very readily have recommended your son to the care of my friend, Dr. Priestly, if he had continued to superintend the academy at Warrington ; but he has left that charge some time since, and is now pastor of a congregation at Leeds in Yorkshire. I am much obliged to you for introducing me to the acquaintance of Mr. Erving, who appears a very intelligent, sensible man. The governing of colonies by instruction has long been a favorite point with ministers here. About thirty years since, in a bill brought into Parliament relating to America, they inserted a clause to make the king's instructions laws in the colonies, which, being opposed by the then agents, was thrown out.

"And I well remember a conversation with Lord Granville, soon after my arrival here, in which he expressed himself on that subject in the following terms. 'Your American Assemblies slight the king's instructions, pretending that they are not laws. The instructions sent over to your governors are not like the pocket instructions given to ambassadors, to be observed at their discretion, as circumstances may require. They are drawn up by grave men, learned in the laws and constitutions of the realm ; they are brought into Council, thoroughly weighed, well considered, and amended if necessary, by the wisdom of that body, and, when received by the governors, they are the laws of the land ; for the king is the legislator of the colonies.' I remember this the better, because, being a new doctrine to me, I put it down as soon as I returned to my lodgings. To be sure, if a governor thinks himself obliged to obey all instructions, whether consistent or inconsistent with the constitution, laws, and rights of the country he governs, and can proceed to govern in that train, there is an end of the constitution, and those rights are abolished. But I wonder that any honest gentleman can think there is honor in being a governor on such terms. And I think the practice cannot possibly continue, especially if opposed with spirit by our Assemblies. At present no attention is paid by the American ministers to any agent here whose appointment is not ratified by the governor's assent ; and, if this is persisted in, you can have none to serve you in a public character, that do not render themselves agree-

ministry had propos'd to make the king's instructions laws in the colonies, but the clause was thrown out by the Commons, for which we adored them as our friends and friends of liberty, till by their conduct towards us in 1765 it seem'd that they had refus'd that point of sovereignty to the king only that they might reserve it for themselves.

After some days, Dr. Fothergill having spoken to the proprietaries, they agreed to a meeting with me at Mr. T. Penn's house in Spring Garden. The conversation at first consisted of mutual declarations of disposition to reasonable accommodations, but I suppose each party had its own ideas of what should be meant by *reasonable*. We then went into consideration of our several points of complaint, which I enumerated. The proprietaries justify'd their conduct as well as they could, and I the Assembly's. We now appeared very wide, and so far from each other in our opinions as to discourage all hope of agreement. However, it was concluded that I should give them the heads of our complaints in writing, and they promis'd then to consider them.

---

able to these ministers, and those otherwise appointed can only promote your interests by conversation as private gentlemen or by writing. Virginia had, as you observe, two agents, one for the Council, the other for the Assembly; but I think the latter only was considered as agent for the Province.

"He was appointed by an act, which expired in the time of Lord Botetourt, and was not revived. The other, I apprehend, continues; but I am not well acquainted with the nature of his appointment. I only understand that he does not concern himself much with the general affairs of the colony.—*Sparks' Works of Franklin*, vol. vii. p. 549.—ED.

I did so soon after, but they put the paper into the hands of their solicitor, Ferdinand John Paris, who managed for them all their law business in their great suit with the neighbouring proprietary of Maryland, Lord Baltimore, which had subsisted 70 years, and wrote for them all their papers and messages in their dispute with the Assembly. He was a proud, angry man, and as I had occasionally in the answers of the Assembly treated his papers with some severity, they being really weak in point of argument and haughty in expression, he had conceived a mortal enmity to me, which discovering itself whenever we met, I declin'd the proprietary's proposal that he and I should discuss the heads of complaint between our two selves, and refus'd treating with any one but them. They then by his advice put the paper into the hands of the Attorney and Solicitor-General for their opinion and counsel upon it, where it lay unanswered a year wanting eight days, during which time I made frequent demands of an answer from the proprietaries, but without obtaining any other than that they had not yet received the opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor-General. What it was when they did receive it I never learnt, for they did not communicate it to me, but sent a long message to the Assembly drawn and signed by Paris, reciting my paper, complaining of its want of formality, as a rudeness on my part, and giving a flimsy justification of their conduct, adding that they should be willing to accommodate

matters if the Assembly would send out *some person of candour* to treat with them for that purpose, intimating thereby that I was not such.

The want of formality or rudeness was, probably, my not having address'd the paper to them with their assum'd titles of True and Absolute Proprietaries of the Province of Pennsylvania, which I omitted as not thinking it necessary in a paper, the intention of which was only to reduce to a certainty by writing, what in conversation I had delivered *viva voce*.

But during this delay, the Assembly having prevailed with Gov'r Denny to pass an act taxing the proprietary estate in common with the estates of the people, which was the grand point in dispute, they omitted answering the message.

When this act however came over, the proprietaries, counselled by Paris, determined to oppose its receiving the royal assent. Accordingly they petition'd the king in Council, and a hearing was appointed in which two lawyers were employ'd by them against the act, and two by me in support of it. They alledg'd that the act was intended to load the proprietary estate in order to spare those of the people, and that if it were suffer'd to continue in force, and the proprietaries who were in odium with the people, left to their mercy in proportioning the taxes, they would inevitably be ruined. We reply'd that the act had no such intention, and would have no such effect. That the assessors were honest and

discreet men under an oath to assess fairly and equitably, and that any advantage each of them might expect in lessening his own tax by augmenting that of the proprietaries was too trifling to induce them to perjure themselves. This is the purport of what I remember as urged by both sides, except that we insisted strongly on the mischievous consequences that must attend a repeal, for that the money, £100,000, being printed and given to the king's use, expended in his service, and now spread among the people, the repeal would strike it dead in their hands to the ruin of many, and the total discouragement of future grants, and the selfishness of the proprietors in soliciting such a general catastrophe, merely from a groundless fear of their estate being taxed too highly, was insisted on in the strongest terms. On this, Lord Mansfield, one of the counsel rose, and beckoning me took me into the clerk's chamber, while the lawyers were pleading, and asked me if I was really of opinion that no injury would be done the proprietary estate in the execution of the act. I said certainly. "Then," says he, "you can have little objection to enter into an engagement to assure that point." I answer'd, "None at all." He then call'd in Paris, and after some discourse, his lordship's proposition was accepted on both sides; a paper to the purpose was drawn up by the Clerk of the Council, which I sign'd with Mr. Charles, who was also an Agent of the Province for their ordinary affairs, when Lord

Mansfield returned to the Council Chamber, where finally the law was allowed to pass. Some changes were however recommended and we also engaged they should be made by a subsequent law, but the Assembly did not think them necessary; for one year's tax having been levied by the act before the order of Council arrived, they appointed a committee to examine the proceedings of the assessors, and on this committee they put several particular friends of the proprietaries. After a full enquiry, they unanimously sign'd a report that they found the tax had been assess'd with perfect equity.

The Assembly looked into my entering into the first part of the engagement, as an essential service to the Province, since it secured the credit of the paper money then spread over all the country. They gave me their thanks in form when I return'd. But the proprietaries were enraged at Governor Denny for having pass'd the act, and turn'd him out with threats of suing him for breach of instructions which he had given bond to observe. He, however, having done it at the instance of the General, and for His Majesty's service, and having some powerful interest at court, despis'd the threats and they were never put in execution.

# THE LIFE OF FRANKLIN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

*CONTINUED.*

FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER WRITINGS.

---

## PART II.

FROM FRANKLIN'S ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND AS AGENT OF THE COLONY OF  
PENNSYLVANIA, IN JUNE, 1757, UNTIL THE CLOSE OF HIS MISSION  
THERE AND RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA IN 1775.





## CHAPTER I.

Domestication and Protracted Illness in London—Removal of Governor Denny—Countermining the Proprietors—Historical Review, etc., of Pennsylvania—Tour through England and Scotland—Cambridge University—Visits the Home of his Ancestors—Counsels the Annexation of Canada to the British Empire—Portrait of William Penn—The “Art of Virtue”—Kames’s “Elements of Criticism”—Directions for a Young Lady’s Reading—Expensiveness of English Wives—Hume’s “Jealousy of Commerce”—Baskerville’s Printing Types—Property of the Penn Family—Death of his Mother-in-law—Lightning Conductors.

1757-1762.

To his wife,  
dated London, 22 Nov.,  
1757.

DURING my illness, which continued near eight weeks, I wrote several letters as I was able. The last was by the packet which sailed from Falmouth above a week since. In that I informed you that my intermitting fever, which had continued to harass me by frequent relapses, was gone off, and I have ever since been gathering strength and flesh. My doctor, Fothergill, who had forbid me the use of pen and ink, now permits me to write as much as I can without over fatiguing myself, and therefore I sit down to write more fully than I have hitherto been able to do.

The 2d of September I wrote to you, that I had had a violent cold and something of a fever, but that it was almost

gone. However, it was not long before I had another severe cold, which continued longer than the first, attended by great pain in my head, the top of which was very hot, and when the pain went off, very sore and tender. These fits of pain continued sometimes longer than at others; seldom less than twelve hours, and once thirty-six hours. I was now and then a little delirious; they cupped me on the back of the head, which seemed to ease me for the present; I took a great deal of bark, both in substance and infusion, and too soon thinking myself well, I ventured out twice, to do a little business and forward the service I am engaged in, and both times got fresh cold and fell down again. My good doctor grew very angry with me for acting contrary to his cautions and directions, and obliged me to promise more observance for the future. He attended me very carefully and affectionately; and the good lady of the house nursed me kindly.\* Billy was also of great service to me, in going from place to place, where I could not go myself, and Peter was very diligent and attentive.† I took so much bark in various ways, that I began to abhor it; I durst not take a vomit, for fear of my head; but at last I

---

\* By the advice of some of his Pennsylvania friends who had boarded there, Franklin took up his residence in London with a Mrs. Margaret Stevenson, in Craven street, Strand, where he lived during the whole of his subsequent residence in London. Both for Mrs. Stevenson and for her daughter Mary, then a young lady of eighteen years, he formed a cordial attachment, which lasted through life. Miss Stevenson was a girl of superior sense, and the interest which Franklin took during the earlier years of their acquaintance, in perfecting her education and in cultivating her friendship, reveals to us one of the most sunny and attractive phases of his character. Miss Stevenson spent most of her time with her aunt, Mrs. Tickell, in the country. This led to a correspondence between her and the doctor, which was faithfully sustained on both sides up to the year of his death.—ED.

† The Billy here referred to is his son William.—ED.

was seized one morning with a vomiting and purging, the latter of which continued the greater part of the day, and I believe was a kind of crisis to the distemper, carrying it clear off; for ever since I feel quite lightsome, and am every day gathering strength; so I hope my seasoning is over, and that I shall enjoy better health during the rest of my stay in England.

Governor Shirley's affairs are still in an uncertain state; he is endeavouring to obtain an inquiry into his conduct, but the confusion of public affairs occasions it to be postponed. He and I visit frequently. I make no doubt but reports will be spread by my enemies to my disadvantage, but let none of them trouble you. If I find I can do my country no good, I will take care at least not to do it any harm; I will neither seek nor expect anything for myself; and, though I may perhaps not be able to obtain for the people what they wish and expect, no interest shall induce me to betray the trust they have reposed in me; so make yourself quite easy with regard to such reports.

I should have read Sally's French letter with more pleasure, but that I thought the French rather too good to be all her own composing. I suppose her master must have corrected it. But I am glad she is improving in that and her music; I send her a French Pamela.

*December 3d.*—I write by little and little as I can find time. I have now gone through all your agreeable letters, which give me fresh pleasure every time I read them. Last night I received another, dated October 16th, which brings me the good news, that you and Sally were got safe home; your last, of the 9th, being from Elizabethtown.

I am glad to hear that Miss Ray is well, and that you correspond. It is not convenient to be forward in giving

advice in such cases. She has prudence enough to judge for herself, and I hope she will judge and act for the best.

I hear there has a miniature painter gone over to Philadelphia, a relation to John Reynolds. If Sally's picture is not done to your mind by the young man, and the other gentleman is a good hand and follows the business, suppose you get Sally's done by him, and send it to me with your small picture, that I may here get all our little family drawn in one conversation piece. I am sorry to hear of the general sickness; I hope it is over before this time; and that little Franky is recovered.

I was as much disappointed in my intention of writing by the packet, as you were in not receiving letters, and it has since given me a great deal of vexation. I wrote to you by way of New York, the day after my arrival in London, which I do not find you have received.

I do not use to be a backward correspondent, though my sickness has brought me behindhand with my friends in that respect. Had I been well, I intended to have gone round among the shops, and bought some pretty things for you and my dear good Sally (whose little hands you say eased your headache), to send by this ship, but I must now defer it to the next, having only got a crimson satin cloak for you, the newest fashion, and the black silk for Sally; but Billy sends her a scarlet feather, muff, and tippet, and a box of fashionable linen for her dress. In the box is a thermometer for Mr. Taylor, and one for Mr. Schlatter, which you will carefully deliver; as also a watch for Mr. Schlatter. I shall write to them. The black silk was sent to Mr. Neates, who undertook to forward it in some package of his.

It is now twelve days since I began to write this letter, and I still continue well, but have not yet quite recovered my strength, flesh, or spirits. I every day drink a glass of infusion of bark in wine, by way of prevention, and hope my fever will no more return. On fair days, which are but few, I venture out about noon. The agreeable conversation I meet with among men of learning, and the notice taken of me by persons of distinction, are the principal things that soothe me for the present under this painful absence from my family and friends. Yet those would not keep me here another week, if I had not other inducements; duty to my country, and hopes of being able to do it service.

Pray remember me kindly to all that love us, and to all that we love. It is endless to name names. I am, my dear child,\* your loving husband.

To his wife,  
dated London, 14 Jan.,  
1758.

I am thankful to God for sparing my little family in that time of general sickness, and hope to find them all well at my return. The New York paper you sent me was the latest that came, and of use to our friend Strahan. He has offered to lay me a considerable wager, that a letter† he has wrote to you will bring you immediately over hither; but I tell him I will not pick his pocket; for I am sure there is no inducement strong enough to prevail with you to cross the seas. I should be glad if I could tell you when I expected to be at home, but that is still in the dark; it is possible I may not

---

\* Franklin, in his correspondence, always addresses his wife as "my dear child," or as "dear Debby."—ED.

† A letter written to persuade Mrs. Franklin to join her husband and reside in London. Had she consented, Franklin's career might have been of less interest to the American reader.—ED.

be able to get away this summer ; but I hope, if I stay another winter, it will be more agreeable than the greatest part of the time I have hitherto spent in England.

To his wife,  
dated London, 21 Jan.,  
1758. I begin to think I shall hardly be able to return before this time twelve months. I am for doing effectually what I came about ; and I find it requires both time and patience. You may think, perhaps, that I can find many amusements here to pass the time agreeably. It is true, the regard and friendship I meet with from persons of worth, and the conversation of ingenious men, give me no small pleasure ; but, at this time of life, domestic comforts afford the most solid satisfaction, and my uneasiness at being absent from my family, and longing desire to be with them, make me often sigh in the midst of cheerful company.

My love to my dear Sally. I confide in you the care of her and her education. I promise myself the pleasure of finding her much improved at my return. When you write to Boston, give my love to sister Jenny, as I have not often time to write to her. If you please, you may send her the enclosed little picture.

To his wife,  
dated London, 19 Feb.,  
1758. Your kind advice about getting a chariot, I had taken some time before ; for I found, that, every time I walked out, I got fresh cold ; and the hackney coaches at this end of the town, where most people keep their own, are the worst in the whole city, miserable, dirty, broken, shabby things, unfit to go into when dressed clean, and such as one would be ashamed to get out of at any gentleman's door. As to burning wood, it would answer no end, unless one would furnish all one's

neighbours and the whole city with the same. The whole town is one great smoky house, and every street a chimney, the air full of floating seacoal soot, and you never get a sweet breath of what is pure, without riding some miles for it into the country.

I am sorry to hear, that a storm has damaged a house of my good friend Mr. Bartram.\* Acquaint him that I have received the seeds, and shall write to him shortly. I hope the Speaker is recovered of the illness you mention.

Give my thanks to Dr. Bond for the care he takes of you. I have wrote to him by this vessel. Mr. Hunter and Polly talk of returning this spring. He is wonderfully recruited. They both desire to be remembered to you. She received your letter and answered it. Her answer I enclosed in one of mine to you. Her daughter Rachel, who plays on the harpsichord and sings prettily, sends Sally one of her songs, that I fancied.

I send you by Captain Budden a large case, and a small box. In the large case is another small box, containing some English china; viz. melons and leaves for a desert of fruit and cream, or the like; a bowl remarkable for the neatness of the figures, made at Bow, near this city; some coffee cups of the same; a Worcester bowl, ordinary. To show the difference of workmanship, there is something from all the china works in England; and one old true china bason mended, of an odd color. The same box contains four silver salt ladles, newest, but ugliest, fashion; a little instrument to core apples; another to make little

---

\* John Bartram, born in Pennsylvania in 1699, died September 21, 1777, was the earliest of American botanists, founder of the first botanical garden in this country, and author of some works on the natural history of parts of this continent.—ED.

turnips out of great ones; six coarse diaper breakfast cloths; they are to spread on the tea-table, for nobody breakfasts here on the naked table, but on the cloth they set a large tea board with the cups. There is also a little basket, a present from Mrs. Stevenson to Sally, and a pair of garters for you, which were knit by the young lady, her daughter, who favored me with a pair of the same kind, the only ones I have been able to wear; as they need not be bound tight, the ridges in them preventing their slipping. We send them therefore as a curiosity for the form, more than for the value. Goody Smith may, if she pleases, make such for me hereafter. My love to her.

In the great case, besides the little box, is contained some carpeting for a best room floor. There is enough for one large or two small ones, it is to be sewed together, the edges being first felled down, and care taken to make the figures meet exactly; there is bordering for the same. This was my fancy. Also two large fine Flanders bed ticks, and two pair of large superfine blankets, two fine damask table-cloths and napkins, and forty-three ells of Ghentish sheeting Holland. These you ordered. There are also fifty-six yards of cotton, printed curiously from copper plates, a new invention, to make bed and window curtains; and seven yards of chair bottoms, printed in the same way, very neat. These were my fancy; but Mrs. Stevenson tells me I did wrong not to buy both of the same color. Also seven yards of printed cotton, blue ground, to make you a gown. I bought it by candlelight, and liked it then, but not so well afterwards. If you do not fancy it, send it as a present from me to sister Jenny. There is a better gown for you, of flowered tissue, sixteen yards, of Mrs. Stevenson's fancy, cost nine guineas; and I think it a great



beauty. There was no more of the sort, or you should have had enough for a *negligée* or suit.

There are also snuffers, a snuffstand, and extinguisher, of steel, which I send for the beauty of the work. The extinguisher is for spermaceti candles only, and is of a new contrivance, to preserve the snuff upon the candle. There is some music Billy bought for his sister, and some pamphlets for the Speaker and for Susy Wright. A mahogany and a little shagreen box, with microscopes and other optical instruments loose, are for Mr. Alison, if he likes them; if not, put them in my room till I return. I send the invoice of them, and I wrote to him formerly the reason of my exceeding his orders. There are also two sets of books, a present from me to Sally, "The World" and "The Connoisseur." My love to her.

I forgot to mention another of my fancyings, viz. a pair of silk blankets, very fine. They are of a new kind, were just taken in a French prize, and such were never seen in England before. They are called blankets, but I think they will be very neat to cover a summer bed, instead of a quilt or counterpane. I had no choice, so you will excuse the soil on some of the folds; your neighbour Foster can get it off. I also forgot, among the china, to mention a large fine jug for beer, to stand in the cooler. I fell in love with it at first sight; for I thought it looked like a fat jolly dame, clean and tidy, with a neat blue and white calico gown on, good natured and lovely, and put me in mind of—somebody. It has the coffee cups in it, packed in best crystal salt, of a peculiar nice flavor, for the table, not to be powdered.

I hope Sally applies herself closely to her French and music, and that I shall find she has made great proficiency.

The harpsichord I was about, and which was to have cost me forty guineas, Mr. Stanley advises me not to buy; and we are looking out for another, one that has been some time in use, and is a tried good one, there being not so much dependence on a new one, though made by the best hands. Sally's last letter to her brother is the best wrote that of late I have seen of hers. I only wish she was a little more careful of her spelling. I hope she continues to love going to church, and would have her read over and over again the "Whole Duty of Man," and the "Lady's Library."

Look at the figures on the china bowl and coffee cups, with your spectacles on; they will bear examining.

I have made your compliments to Mrs. Stevenson. She is indeed very obliging, takes great care of my health, and is very diligent when I am any way indisposed; but yet I have a thousand times wished you with me, and my little Sally with her ready hands and feet to do, and go, and come, and get what I wanted. There is a great difference in sickness between being nursed with that tender attention, which proceeds from sincere love; and ——— (*The remainder of this letter is lost.*)

To his wife,  
dated London, 10 June,  
1758.

I was down at Cambridge with Billy when Snead sailed, so I did not write again by him as I intended. His sailing so soon was unexpected to me. I am somewhat out of the way of vessels, and Mr. Partridge by mistake wrote me Snead was not to sail that week; so, being very kindly entertained there in the colleges, we did not hurry so soon home as we might have done. However, this vessel perhaps may be there about the same time.

I think nobody ever had more faithful correspondents than I have in Mr. Hughes and you. It is impossible for me to get or keep out of your debts. I received the bill of exchange you got of Mr. Nelson, and it is paid. I received also the Proprietary's account. It gives me concern to receive such frequent accounts of your being indisposed; but we both of us grow in years, and must expect our constitutions, though tolerably good in themselves, will by degrees give way to the infirmities of age.

I have sent, in a trunk of the Library Company's, some of the best writing paper for letters, and best quills and wax, all for Mrs. Moore, which I beg she would accept; having received such civilities here from her sister and brother Scott, as are not in my power to return. I shall send some to Sally by the next opportunity. By Captain Lutwidge I sent my dear girl a newest fashioned white hat and cloak, and sundry little things, which I hope will get safe to hand. I now send her a pair of buckles, made of French paste stones, which are next in lustre to diamonds. They cost three guineas, and are said to be cheap at that price. I fancy I see more likeness in her picture than I did at first, and I look at it often with pleasure, as at least it reminds me of her. Yours is at the painter's, who is to copy it and do me of the same size; but, as to family pieces, it is said they never look well, and are quite out of fashion, and I find the limner very unwilling to undertake any thing of the kind. However, when Franky's comes, and that of Sally by young Hesselius, I shall see what can be done. I wonder how you came by Ben Lay's picture.

You are very prudent not to engage in party disputes. Women never should meddle with them, except in endeavours to reconcile their husbands, brothers, and friends,

who happen to be of contrary sides. If your sex keep cool, you may be a means of cooling ours the sooner, and restoring more speedily that social harmony among fellow-citizens, that is so desirable after long and bitter dissensions.

Cousin Dunlap\* has wrote me an account of his purchasing Chattin's printing-house. I wish it may be advantageous to him without injuring Mr. Hall. I can however do nothing to encourage him, as a printer in Philadelphia, inconsistent with my preëngagement to so faithful a partner. And I trust you will take care not to do any thing in that way, that may draw reflections on me; as if I did underhand, through your means, what I would not care to appear in openly. I hope he will keep a good understanding with Mr. Hall,† and I am pleased to hear that he asked his advice and friendship; but I have thought it right and necessary to forbid the use of my letters by Mr. Dunlap without Mr. Hall's consent. The post-office, if it is agreeable to you, may be removed to Mr. Dunlap's house, it being proposed by our good friend Mr. Hughes.

I wrote to you lately to speak to Ambruster‡ not to make use of my name any more in his newspaper, as I have no particular concern in it, but as one of the trustees only. I have no prospect of returning till next spring, so you will not expect me. But pray remember to make me as happy as you can, by sending some pippins for myself and friends, some of your small hams, and some cranberries.

\* William Dunlap, a native of Ireland, a printer in Philadelphia, and recently married to a relation of Mrs. Franklin.—ED.

† Mr. David Hall had been the partner, and was now the successor, of Franklin in his business.—ED.

‡ Anthony Ambruster, a German printer in Philadelphia, and for some time publisher of a newspaper there in the German language.—ED.

Billy is of the Middle Temple, and will be called to the bar either this term or the next. I write this in answer to your particular inquiry. I am glad you like the cloak I sent you. The black silk was sent by our friend Mr. Collinson. I never saw it. Your answer to Mr. Strahan was just what it should be. I was much pleased with it. He fancied his rhetoric and art would certainly bring you over.

I have ordered two large print Common Prayer Books to be bound, on purpose for you and Goody Smith; and, that the largeness of the print may not make them too bulky, the christenings, matrimonies, and every thing else that you and she have not immediate and constant occasion for, are to be omitted. So you will both of you be reprieved from the use of spectacles in church a little longer.

If the ringing of the bells frightens you, tie a piece of wire from one bell to the other, and that will conduct the lightning without ringing or snapping, but silently; though I think it best the bells should be at liberty to ring, that you may know when they are electrified; and when you are afraid you may keep at a distance.\* I wrote last winter to Josey Crocker to come over hither and stay a year, and work in some of the best shops for improvement in his business, and therefore did not send the tools; but, if he is about to be married, I would not advise him to come. I shall send the tools immediately. You have disposed of the appletrees very properly. I condole with you on the loss of your walnuts.

---

\* In the year 1753 Franklin had erected an iron rod for the purpose of drawing lightning from the clouds into his house. He also placed two bells in such a position that they would ring when the rod was electrified. Mrs. Franklin, it seems, did not fancy having the clouds on such a familiar footing in the house during her husband's absence.—ED.

I see the governor's treatment of his wife makes all the ladies angry. If it is on account of the bad example, that will soon be removed; for the Proprietors are privately looking out for another; being determined to discard him, and the place goes a begging. One, to whom it was offered, sent a friend to make some inquiries of me. The Proprietors told him they had there a city-house and a country-house, which he might use rent free; that every thing was so cheap he might live on five hundred pounds sterling a year, keep a genteel table, a coach, &c., and his income would be at least nine hundred pounds. If it fell short of that, the Proprietors would engage to make it up. For the truth of his being able to live genteelly, and keep a coach for five hundred pounds a year, the Proprietors referred him to Mr. Hamilton, who, it seems, told him the same story; but, on inquiry of Mr. Morris, he had quite a different account, and knew not which to believe. The gentleman is one Mr. Graves, a lawyer of the Temple. He hesitated a good while, and I am now told has declined accepting it. I wish that may not be true, for he has the character of being a very good sort of man; though while the instructions continue, it matters little who is our governor. It was to have been kept a secret from me, that the Proprietors were looking out for a new one; because they would not have Mr. Denny know any thing about it, till the appointment was actually made, and the gentleman ready to embark. So you may make a secret of it too, if you please, and oblige all your friends with it.\*

---

\* The negotiations with Mr. Graves to succeed Governor Denny failed, and the post was offered to and accepted by Mr. James Hamilton, a native of Philadelphia, who had been formerly governor of the colony, and who chanced to be then in London. On the disputed question of taxing the proprietary estates, the Proprietors did not gain much by the change.—ED.

I need not tell you to assist godmother in her difficulties; for I know you will think it as agreeable to me, as it is to your own good disposition. I could not find the bit of thread you mention to have sent me, of your own spinning. Perhaps it was too fine to be seen. I am glad little Franky begins to talk. It will divert you to have him often with you.

Mrs. Stevenson and her daughter desire me to present their compliments, and offer their services to you and Sally. I think of going into the country soon, and shall be pretty much out this summer, in different parts of England. I depend chiefly on these journeys for the establishment of my health.

To the Speaker  
and Committee of the  
Pennsylvania  
Assembly, dated  
London,  
10 June, 1758.

Mr. Charles\* at my request has drawn the state of the case, in order to obtain opinions of eminent lawyers how far our present privileges would be affected in case of a change of government, by our coming immediately under the crown. I send you a copy of this case, with the opinion of our counsel upon it, who is esteemed the best acquainted with our American affairs and constitutions, as well as with government law in general. He being also thoroughly knowing in the present views of the Board of Trade, and in their connexions and characters, has given me withal, as a friend, some prudential advice in a separate sheet distinct from his law opinion, because the law opinion might necessarily appear where he would not care the advice should be seen. I send you, also, a copy of this, and should be glad of your sentiments upon it. One thing, that he recom-

---

\* A lawyer who, for some years, had been agent of the Assembly of Pennsylvania in England.—ED.

mends to be done before we push our point in Parliament, is, removing the prejudices, that art and accident have spread among the people of this country against us, and obtaining for us the good opinion of the bulk of mankind without doors. This I hope we have it in our power to do, by means of a work now nearly ready for the press, calculated to engage the attention of many readers, and at the same time to efface the bad impressions received of us; but it is thought best not to publish it, till a little before the next session of Parliament.\*

The Proprietors are determined to discard their present governor, as soon as they can find a successor to their mind. They have lately offered the government to one Mr. Graves, a gentleman of the Temple, who has had it for some time under consideration, and makes a difficulty of accepting it. The beginning of the week it was thought he would accept; but on Thursday night I was told he had resolved to refuse it. I know not, however, whether he may not yet be prevailed on. He has the character of a man of good understanding, and good dispositions. (*The remainder of the letter is lost.*)

---

\* The book of which Franklin here speaks is the "Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania," which was published in the year 1759. It was a rather lively attack upon William Penn and his descendants, and made no slight sensation when it appeared. Public opinion ascribed its authorship to Franklin, and he was assailed for it with great virulence by all the proprietary press. Franklin did not disavow the paternity then, nor did he ever do so publicly. Indeed, there was little doubt that he had furnished most of the material, and that it was printed, published, and circulated under his direction; but we now know, from a letter to David Hume of the 27th Sept., 1760, that though he was not strictly speaking the author, he must have furnished all the material. It was doubtless put into shape by his son William and by his old friend Ralph. The letter to Hume will be found *infra*, p. 410.—ED.



To his wife, In mine of June 10th, by the Mercury,  
 dated London, 6 Sept., Captain Robinson, I mentioned our having  
 1758. been at Cambridge. We stayed there a week,  
 being entertained with great kindness by the principal  
 people, and shown all the curiosities of the place; and,  
 returning by another road to see more of the country, we  
 came again to London. I found the journey advantageous  
 to my health, increasing both my health and spirits, and  
 therefore, as all the great folks were out of town, and public  
 business at a stand, I the more easily prevailed with myself  
 to take another journey, and accept of the invitation we  
 had, to be again at Cambridge at the Commencement, the  
 beginning of July. We went accordingly, were present at  
 all the ceremonies, dined every day in their halls, and my  
 vanity was not a little gratified by the particular regard  
 shown me by the chancellor and vice-chancellor of the  
 University, and the heads of colleges.

After the Commencement, we went from Cambridge  
 through Huntingdonshire into Northumberlandshire,\* and  
 at Wellingborough, on inquiry, we found still living Mary  
 Fisher, whose maiden name was Franklin, daughter and  
 only child of Thomas Franklin, my father's eldest brother.  
 She is five years older than sister Dowse, and remembers  
 her going away with my father and his then wife, and two  
 other children to New England about the year 1685. We  
 have had no correspondence with her since my uncle  
 Benjamin's death, now near thirty years. I knew she had  
 lived at Wellingborough, and had married there to one Mr.  
 Richard Fisher, a grazier and tanner, about fifty years ago,  
 but did not expect to see either of them alive, so inquired for

---

\* Obviously a misprint or slip of the pen for Northamptonshire.—ED.

their posterity. I was directed to their house, and we found them both alive, but weak with age, very glad however to see us. She seems to have been a very smart, sensible woman. They are wealthy, have left off business, and live comfortably. They have had only one child, a daughter, who died, when about thirty years of age, unmarried. She gave me several of my uncle Benjamin's letters to her, and acquainted me where the other remains of the family lived, of which I have, since my return to London, found out a daughter of my father's only sister, very old, and never married. She is a good, clever woman, but poor, though vastly contented with her situation, and very cheerful. The others are in different parts of the country. I intend to visit them, but they were too much out of our tour in that journey.

From Wellingborough we went to Ecton, about three or four miles, being the village where my father was born, and where his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had lived, and how many of the family before them we know not. We went first to see the old house and grounds; they came to Mr. Fisher with his wife, and, after letting them for some years, finding his rent something ill paid, he sold them. The land is now added to another farm, and a school kept in the house. It is a decayed old stone building, but still known by the name of Franklin House. Thence we went to visit the rector of the parish, who lives close by the church, a very ancient building. He entertained us very kindly, and showed us the old church register, in which were the births, marriages, and burials of our ancestors for two hundred years, as early as his book began. His wife, a goodnatured, chatty, old lady, (granddaughter of the famous Archdeacon Palmer, who formerly

had that parish, and lived there,) remembered a great deal about the family; carried us out into the churchyard, and showed us several of their gravestones, which were so covered with moss that we could not read the letters, till she ordered a hard brush and basin of water, with which Peter scoured them clean, and then Billy copied them. She entertained and diverted us highly with stories of Thomas Franklin, Mrs. Fisher's father, who was a conveyancer, something of a lawyer, clerk of the county courts, and clerk to the archdeacon in his visitations; a very leading man in all county affairs, and much employed in public business. He set on foot a subscription for erecting chimes in their steeple, and completed it, and we heard them play. He found out an easy method of saving their village meadows from being drowned, as they used to be sometimes by the river, which method is still in being; but, when first proposed, nobody could conceive how it could be; "but however," they said, "if Franklin says he knows how to do it, it will be done." His advice and opinion were sought for on all occasions, by all sorts of people, and he was looked upon, she said, by some, as something of a conjurer. He died just four years before I was born, on the same day of the same month.

Since our return to London, I have had a kind letter from cousin Fisher, and another from the rector, which I send you.

From Ecton we went to Northampton, where we stayed part of the day; then went to Coventry, and from thence to Birmingham. Here, upon inquiry, we soon found out yours, and cousin Wilkinson's, and cousin Cash's relations. First, we found out one of the Cashes, and he went with us to Rebecca Flint's, where we saw her and her husband.

R\*

She is a turner and he a buttonmaker ; they have no children ; were very glad to see any person that knew their sister Wilkinson ; told us what letters they had received, and showed us some of them ; and even showed us that they had, out of respect, preserved a keg, in which they had received a present of some sturgeon. They sent for their brother, Joshua North, who came with his wife immediately to see us ; he is a turner also, and has six children, a lively, active man. Mrs. Flint desired me to tell her sister, that they live still in the old house she left them in, which I think she says was their father's. From thence Mr. North went with us to your cousin Benjamin's. (*The remainder of this letter is wanting.*)

To his sister,  
Mrs. Jane Mecom,  
dated  
London, 16  
Sept., 1758.

I wonder you have had no letter from me since my being in England. I have wrote you at least two, and I think a third before this, and, what was next to waiting on you in person, sent you my picture. In June last I sent Benny\* a trunk of books, and wrote to him. I hope they are come to hand, and that he meets with encouragement in his business. I congratulate you on the conquest of Cape Breton, and hope, as your people took it by praying the first time, you will now pray that it may never be given up again, which you then forgot. Billy is well, but in the country. I left him at Tunbridge Wells, where we spent a fortnight, and he is now gone with some company to see Portsmouth. We have been together over a great part of England this summer, and, among other places, visited the town our father was born in, and found some relations in that part of the country still living.

---

\* Mrs. Mecom's son.—ED.

Our cousin Jane Franklin, daughter of our uncle John, died about a year ago. We saw her husband, Robert Page, who gave us some old letters to his wife from uncle Benjamin. In one of them, dated Boston, July 4th, 1723, he writes that your uncle Josiah has a daughter Jane, about twelve years old, a good-humored child. So keep up to your character, and don't be angry when you have no letters. In a little book he sent her, called "None but Christ," he wrote an acrostic on her name, which for name-sake's sake, as well as the good advice it contains, I transcribe and send you, viz.

"Illuminated from on high,  
And shining brightly in your sphere,  
Ne'er faint, but keep a steady eye,  
Expecting endless pleasures there.

"Flee vice as you'd a serpent flee;  
Raise *faith* and *hope* three stories higher,  
And let Christ's endless love to thee  
Ne'er cease to make thy love aspire.  
Kindness of heart by words express,  
Let your obedience be sincere,  
In prayer and praise your God address,  
Nor cease, till he can cease to hear."

After professing truly that I had a great esteem and veneration for the pious author, permit me a little to play the commentator and critic on these lines. The meaning of *three stories higher* seems somewhat obscure. You are to understand, then, that *faith*, *hope*, and *charity* have been called the three steps of Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to heaven; our author calls them *stories*, likening religion to a building, and these are the three stories of the Christian edifice. Thus improvement in religion is called *building up* and *edification*. *Faith* is then the ground floor, *hope* is up one pair of stairs. My dear beloved Jenny, don't

delight so much to dwell in those lower rooms, but get as fast as you can into the garret, for in truth the best room in the house is *charity*. For my part, I wish the house was turned upside down; it is so difficult (when one is fat) to go up stairs; and not only so, but I imagine *hope* and *faith* may be more firmly built upon *charity*, than *charity* upon *faith* and *hope*. However that may be, I think it the better reading to say—

“Raise faith and hope one story higher.”

Correct it boldly, and I'll support the alteration; for, when you are up two stories already, if you raise your building three stories higher you will make five in all, which is two more than there should be, you expose your upper rooms more to the winds and storms; and, besides, I am afraid the foundation will hardly bear them, unless indeed you build with such light stuff as straw and stubble, and that, you know, won't stand fire. Again, where the author says,

“Kindness of heart by words express,”

strike out *words*, and put in *deeds*. The world is too full of compliments already. They are the rank growth of every soil, and choke the good plants of benevolence and beneficence; nor do I pretend to be the first in this comparison of words and actions to plants; you may remember an ancient poet, whose works we have all studied and copied at school long ago.

“A man of words and not of deeds  
Is like a garden full of weeds.”

It is pity that good works, among some sorts of people, are so little valued, and good words admired in their stead; I mean seemingly pious discourses, instead of humane benevolent actions. Those they almost put out of count-

nance, by calling morality *rotten morality*, righteousness *ragged righteousness*, and even filthy rags. So much by way of commentary.

My wife will let you see my letter, containing an account of our travels, which I would have you read to sister Dowse, and give my love to her. I have no thoughts of returning till next year, and then may possibly have the pleasure of seeing you and yours; taking Boston in my way home.\*

\* Much of Franklin's time during the year 1759 was devoted to electrical experiments, which led to a large correspondence with the learned throughout Europe, most of which, however, is unhappily lost. The following flattering letter from the celebrated Dr. Musschenbroek was accompanied by a list of all the principal treatises on electricity, which had at that time been published in the Latin, German, French, and English languages.

"VIRO NOBILISSIMO AMPLISSIMOQUE, BENJAMINI FRANKLIN, S. P. D.  
P. V. MUSSCHENBROEK.

"Vir reverendus, qui se ministerio Evangelico fungi profitebatur, me tuo nomine rogavit, ut indicarem auctores, qui de Electricitate scripserunt, mihi que erant cogniti. Votis tuis lubenter annui; ita addisces quid alii in Europâ præstiterunt eruditi, sed simul videbis neminem magis recondita mysteria Electricitatis detexisse Franklino.

"Utinam modo pergas proprio Marte capere experimenta, et aliâ incedere viâ, quam Europæi inceserunt, nam tum plura et alia deteges, quæ seculorum spatio laterent philosophos. Aër Pensylvanicus videtur esse electricitatis plenissimus; sed attende an per totum anni curriculum, an interdum pauperior sit; quibus anni diebus, quo flante vento, quâ coeli constitutione; distingue nubes electricitatis plenas aut expertes, uti volante in altum serico incepisti detegere omnium primus. Opto similia perpulcra inventa legere Pensylvanica, ac scripsisti in litteris ad expertissimum virum Collinsonum; si que mecum quædam communicare digneris, tecum alia communicabo, nam meus scopus est scientiam physicam et naturalem promovere quamdiu vivam.

"Tu sis, amicissime, salutatus a tui benevolentissimo cultore, et vale.

"*Leyda, 15<sup>o</sup> Aprilis, 1759.*"—ED.

To Lord Kames,\* dated London, 3 Jan., 1760. You have been pleased kindly to desire to have all my publications. I had daily expectations of procuring some of them from a friend to whom I formerly sent them when I was in America, and postponed writing to you, till I should obtain them; but at length he tells me he cannot find them; very mortifying this to an author, that his works should so soon be lost! So I can only send you my "Observations on the Peopling of Countries," which happens to have been reprinted here; "The Description of the Pennsylvania Fireplace," a machine of my contriving; and some little sketches that have been printed in the "Grand Magazine," which I should hardly own, did I not know that your friendly partiality would make them seem at least tolerable.

How unfortunate I was, that I did not press you and Lady Kames more strongly to favor us with your company farther. How much more agreeable would our journey have been, if we could have enjoyed you as far as York. We could have beguiled the way, by discoursing on a thousand things, that now we may never have an opportunity of considering together; for conversation warms the mind, enlivens the imagination, and is continually starting fresh game, that is immediately pursued and taken, and which would never have occurred in the duller intercourse of epistolary correspondence. So that whenever I reflect on the great pleasure and

---

\* Author of "Elements of Criticism," published in 1762; "Sketches of the History of Man," in 1773; and a small work published in 1761, entitled "An Introduction to the Art of Thinking," which was originally compiled for the use of his own children. During this trip to Scotland the doctor, with his son William, passed some time with Lord Kames, and a friendship grew out of their intimacy which lasted during their lives. Lord Kames died December 27th, 1782, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. This letter was written not long after Franklin's return to London.—ED.



advantage I received from the free communication of sentiment, in the conversation we had at Kames, and in the agreeable little rides to the Tweed side, I shall for ever regret our premature parting.

No one can more sincerely rejoice than I do, on the reduction of Canada; and this is not merely as I am a colonist, but as I am a Briton. I have long been of opinion, that the *foundations of the future grandeur and stability of the British empire lie in America*; and though, like other foundations, they are low and little now, they are, nevertheless, broad and strong enough to support the greatest political structure that human wisdom ever yet erected. I am, therefore, by no means for restoring Canada. If we keep it, all the country from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi will in another century be filled with British people. Britain itself will become vastly more populous, by the immense increase of its commerce; the Atlantic sea will be covered with your trading ships; and your naval power, thence continually increasing, will extend your influence round the whole globe, and awe the world! If the French remain in Canada, they will continually harass our colonies by the Indians, and impede if not prevent their growth; your progress to greatness will at best be slow, and give room for many accidents that may for ever prevent it. But I refrain, for I see you begin to think my notions extravagant, and look upon them as the ravings of a mad prophet.

Your Lordship's kind offer of Penn's picture is extremely obliging. But, were it certainly his picture, it would be too valuable a curiosity for me to think of accepting it. I should only desire the favor of leave to take a copy of it. I could wish to know the history of the picture before it

came into your hands, and the grounds for supposing it his. I have at present some doubts about it; first, because the primitive Quakers declared against pictures as a vain expense; a man's suffering his portrait to be taken was conceived as pride; and I think to this day it is very little practised among them. Then, it is on a board; and I imagine the practice of painting portraits on boards did not come down so low as Penn's time; but of this I am not certain. My other reason is an anecdote I have heard, viz. that when old Lord Cobham was adorning his gardens at Stow with busts of famous men, he made inquiry of the family for the picture of William Penn, in order to get a bust formed from it, but could find none; that Sylvanus Bevan, an old Quaker apothecary, remarkable for the notice he takes of countenances, and a knack he has of cutting in ivory, strong likenesses of persons he has once seen, hearing of Lord Cobham's desire, set himself to recollect Penn's face, with which he had been well acquainted; and cut a little bust of him in ivory, which he sent to Lord Cobham, without any letter or notice that it was Penn's. But my Lord, who had personally known Penn, on seeing it, immediately cried out, "Whence comes this? It is William Penn himself!" And from this little bust, they say, the large one in the gardens was formed.

I doubt, too, whether the whisker was not quite out of use at the time when Penn must have been of an age appearing in the face of that picture. And yet, notwithstanding these reasons, I am not without some hope that it may be his; because I know some eminent Quakers have had their pictures privately drawn and deposited with trusty friends; and know, also, that there is extant at Philadelphia a very good picture of Mrs. Penn, his last wife. After all,

I own I have a strong desire to be satisfied concerning this picture; and as Bevan is yet living here, and some other old Quakers that remember William Penn, who died but 1718, I would wish to have it sent to me carefully packed up in a box by the wagon, (for I would not trust it by sea,) that I may obtain their opinion. The charges I shall very cheerfully pay; and if it proves to be Penn's picture, I shall be greatly obliged to your Lordship for leave to take a copy of it, and will carefully return the original.\*

My son joins with me in the most respectful compliments to you and Lady Kames. Our conversation, till we came to York, was chiefly a recollection of what we had seen and heard, the pleasure we had enjoyed, and the kindnesses we had received, in Scotland, and how far that country had exceeded our expectations. On the whole, I must say, I think the time we spent there was six weeks of the densest happiness I have met with in any part of my life; and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty has left so pleasing an impression on my memory, that, did not strong connexions draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in.

To John  
Hughes, da-  
ted London,  
7 Jan., 1760.

There has been for some time a talk of peace, and probably we should have had one this winter, if the king of Prussia's late misfortunes had not given the enemy fresh spirits, and encouraged them

---

\* Mr. Sparks thinks Dr. Franklin's doubts, respecting the above picture, were probably just. Mr. Tytler says, in his "Life of Lord Kames," that it was sent to Dr. Franklin, and never returned; but the fact of its not having been known in Philadelphia, nor ever heard of since the above letter was written, is strong presumptive proof that it was not a portrait of William Penn.—ED.

to try their luck another campaign, and exert all their remaining strength, in hopes of treating with Hanover in their hands. If this should be the case, possibly most of our advantages may be given up again at the treaty, and some among our great men begin already to prepare the minds of people for this, by discoursing that to keep Canada would draw on us the envy of other powers, and occasion a confederation against us; that the country is too large for us to people; not worth possessing, and the like. These notions I am every day and every hour combating, and I think not without some success. The event God only knows. The argument that seems to have the principal weight is, that, in case of another war, if we keep possession of Canada, the nation will save two or three millions a year, now spent in defending the American colonies, and be so much the stronger in Europe, by the addition of the troops now employed on that side of the water. To this I add, that the colonies would thrive and increase in a much greater degree, and that a vast additional demand would arise for British manufactures, to supply so great an extent of Indian country; with many other topics, which I urge occasionally according to the company I happen into, or the persons I address. And, on the whole, I flatter myself that my being here at this time may be of some service to the general interest of America.

To his wife,  
dated London, 5 March,  
1760.

I received the enclosed some time since from Mr. Strahan. I afterwards spent an evening in conversation with him on the subject. He was very urgent with me to stay in England, and prevail with you to remove hither with Sally. He proposed several advantageous schemes to me, which appeared reasonably

founded. His family is a very agreeable one ; Mrs. Strahan a sensible and good woman, the children of amiable characters, and particularly the young man, who is sober, ingenious, and industrious, and a desirable person. In point of circumstances there can be no objection ; Mr. Strahan being in such a way as to lay up a thousand pounds every year from the profits of his business, after maintaining his family and paying all charges. I gave him, however, two reasons why I could not think of removing hither ; one, my affection to Pennsylvania, and long established friendships and other connexions there ; the other, your invincible aversion to crossing the seas. And without removing hither, I could not think of parting with my daughter to such a distance. I thanked him for the regard shown to us in the proposal, but gave him no expectation that I should forward the letters. So you are at liberty to answer or not, just as you think proper. Let me, however, know your sentiments. You need not deliver the letter to Sally, if you do not think it proper.

To Mary Stevenson, dated  
Craven St.,  
London, 1  
May, 1760.

I embrace, most gladly, my dear friend's proposal of a subject for our future correspondence ; not only as it will occasion my hearing from her more frequently, but as it will lay me under a necessity of improving my own knowledge, that I may be better able to assist in her improvement. I only fear my necessary business and journeys, with the natural indolence of an old man, will make me too unpunctual a correspondent. For this I must hope some indulgence. But why will you, by the cultivation of your mind, make yourself still more amiable, and a more desirable companion for a man of understanding, when you are determined, as I hear, to live single ? If we enter, as you propose, into

*moral* as well as natural philosophy, I fancy, when I have established my authority as a tutor, I shall take upon me to lecture you a little on the chapter of duty.

But, to be serious, our easiest mode of proceeding I think will be, for you to read some books that I may recommend to you ; and, in the course of your reading, whatever occurs, that you do not thoroughly apprehend, or that you clearly conceive and find pleasure in, may occasion either some questions for further information, or some observations that show how far you are satisfied and pleased with your author. These will furnish matter for your letters to me, and, in consequence, mine also to you.

Let me know, then, what books you have already perused on the subject intended, that I may the better judge what to advise for your next reading. And believe me ever, my dear good girl, your affectionate friend and servant.

To Lord Kames, dated London, 9 May, 1760. I have endeavored to comply with your request in writing something on the present situation of our affairs in America, in order to give more correct notions of the British interest with regard to the colonies, than those I found many sensible men possessed of. Enclosed you have the production, such as it is. I wish it may, in any degree, be of service to the public. I shall at least hope this from it, for my own part, that you will consider it as a letter from me to you, and take its length as some excuse for being so long a coming.\*

I am now reading with great pleasure and improvement your excellent work, "The Principles of Equity." It will

---

\* This was probably the tract entitled "The Interest of Great Britain Considered," which was first published in 1760.—ED.

be of the greatest advantage to the judges in our colonies, not only in those which have courts of chancery, but also in those which, having no such courts, are obliged to mix equity with common law. It will be of more service to the colony judges, as few of them have been bred to the law. I have sent a book to a particular friend, one of the judges of the Supreme Court in Pennsylvania.

I will shortly send you a copy of the "Chapter"\* you are pleased to mention in so obliging a manner; and shall be extremely obliged in receiving a copy of the collection of "Maxims for the Conduct of Life," which you are preparing for the use of your children. I purpose likewise a little work for the benefit of youth, to be called "The Art of Virtue."† From the title I think you will hardly conjecture what the nature of such a book may be. I must therefore explain it a little. Many people lead bad lives that would gladly lead good ones, but do not know *how* to make the change. They have frequently *resolved* and *endeavoured* it; but in vain, because their endeavours have not been properly conducted. To expect people to be

\* Franklin here refers to a parable against persecution which he had recited to Lord Kames, and of which afterwards, at his lordship's request, he sent him a copy. An imperfect version of the piece appeared in Lord Kames's "Sketches of the History of Man," some fourteen years later, with the following declaration by the author:

"It was communicated to me by Dr. Franklin, of Philadelphia, a man who makes a great figure in the learned world, and who would make a still greater figure for benevolence and candor, were virtue as much regarded in this declining age as knowledge."

The parable was of Persian origin, so far as we know, though Franklin doubtless found it in the "Liberty of Prophesying" of Jeremy Taylor, who says it was taken from the "Jews' books."—ED.

† It does not appear that this intention was ever fulfilled. Some remarks on the subject will be found on pp. 241-244.—ED.

good, to be just, to be temperate, &c., without *showing* them *how* they should *become* so, seems like the ineffectual charity mentioned by the apostle, which consisted in saying to the hungry, the cold, and the naked, "Be ye fed, be ye warmed, be ye clothed;" without showing them how they should get food, fire, or clothing.

Most people have naturally *some* virtues, but none have naturally *all* the virtues. To *acquire* those that are wanting, and secure what we acquire, as well as those we have naturally, is the subject of *an art*. It is as properly an art as painting, navigation, or architecture. If a man would become a painter, navigator, or architect, it is not enough that he is *advised* to be one, that he is *convinced* by the arguments of his adviser, that it would be for his advantage to be one, and that he resolves to be one, but he must also be taught the principles of the art, be shown all the methods of working, and how to acquire the habits of using properly all the instruments; and thus regularly and gradually he arrives, by practice, at some perfection in the art. If he does not proceed thus, he is apt to meet with difficulties that discourage him, and make him drop the pursuit.

My "Art of Virtue" has also its instruments, and teaches the manner of using them. Christians are directed to have faith in Christ, as the effectual means of obtaining the change they desire. It may, when sufficiently strong, be effectual with many; for a full opinion, that a teacher is infinitely wise, good, and powerful, and that he will certainly reward and punish the obedient and disobedient, must give great weight to his precepts, and make them much more attended to by his disciples. But many have this faith in so weak a degree, that it does not produce the effect. Our "Art of Virtue" may, therefore, be of great



service to those whose faith is unhappily not so strong, and may come in aid of its weakness. Such as are naturally well disposed, and have been so carefully educated, as that good habits have been early established, and bad ones prevented, have less need of this art ; but all may be more or less benefited by it. It is, in short, to be adapted for universal use. I imagine what I have now been writing will seem to savour of great presumption. I must therefore speedily finish my little piece, and communicate the manuscript to you, that you may judge whether it is possible to make good such pretensions. I shall at the same time hope for the benefit of your corrections.

To Mary Stevenson, dated  
Craven St.,  
16 May, 1760.

I send my good girl the books I mentioned to her last night. I beg her to accept of them as a small mark of my esteem and friendship. They are written in the familiar, easy manner, for which the French are so remarkable ; and afford a good deal of philosophic and practical knowledge, unembarrassed with the dry mathematics used by more exact reasoners, but which are apt to discourage young beginners.

I would advise you to read with a pen in your hand, and enter in a little book short hints of what you find that is curious, or that may be useful ; for this will be the best method of imprinting such particulars in your memory, where they will be ready, either for practice on some future occasion, if they are matters of utility, or at least to adorn and improve your conversation, if they are rather points of curiosity. And as many of the terms of science are such, as you cannot have met with in your common reading, and may therefore be unacquainted with, I think it would be well for you to have a good dictionary at hand, to consult

immediately when you meet with a word you do not comprehend the precise meaning of. This may at first seem troublesome and interrupting; but it is a trouble that will daily diminish, as you will daily find less and less occasion for your dictionary, as you become more acquainted with the terms; and in the mean time you will read with more satisfaction, because with more understanding.

When any point occurs, in which you would be glad to have farther information than your book affords you, I beg you would not in the least apprehend, that I should think it a trouble to receive and answer your questions. It will be a pleasure, and no trouble. For though I may not be able, out of my own little stock of knowledge, to afford you what you require, I can easily direct you to the books, where it may most readily be found.

To his wife, I am concerned that so much trouble should  
dated London, be given you by idle reports concerning me.  
27 June, 1760. Be satisfied, my dear, that while I have my  
senses, and God vouchsafes me his protection, I shall do  
nothing unworthy the character of an honest man, and one  
that loves his family.\*

I have not yet seen Mr. Beatty, nor do I know where to write to him. He forwarded your letter to me from Ireland.

---

\* On a later occasion he wrote to his wife: "Let no one make you uneasy with their idle or malicious scribbings, but enjoy yourself and friends, and the comforts of life, that God has bestowed on you, with a cheerful heart. I am glad their pamphlets give you so little concern. I make no other answer to them at present, than what appears in the seal of this letter." The device on the seal was a dove, standing on a coiled serpent in the act of raising its head and darting out its tongue, surrounded with the motto, *Innocence surmont tout*. This was not his usual seal, but one adopted for the occasion.—S.

The paragraph of your letter, inserted in the papers, related to the negro school. I gave it to the gentlemen concerned; as it was a testimony in favor of their pious design. But I did not expect they would print it with your name. They have, since chosen me one of the Society, and I am at present chairman for the current year. I enclose you an account of their proceedings.\*

I did not receive the "Prospect of Quebec," which you mention that you sent me. Peter continues with me, and behaves as well as I can expect, in a country where there are many occasions of spoiling servants, if they are ever so good. He has as few faults as most of them, and I see with only one eye, and hear only with one ear; so we rub on pretty comfortably. King, that you inquire after, is not with us. He ran away from our house near two years ago, while we were absent in the country; but was soon found in Suffolk, where he had been taken into the service of a lady, that was very fond of the merit of making him a Christian, and contributing to his education and improvement. As he was of little use, and often in mischief, Billy consented to her keeping him while we stay in England. So the lady sent him to school, has him taught to read and write, to play on the violin and French horn, with some other accomplishments more useful in a servant. Whether she will finally be willing to part with him, or persuade Billy to sell him to her, I know not. In the mean time he is no expense to us.

The accounts you give me of the marriages of our friends are very agreeable. I love to hear of every thing that tends

---

\* This relates to a scheme, which had been set on foot by the philanthropic Dr. Thos. Bray, for the conversion of negroes in the British plantations.—ED.

to increase the number of good people. You cannot conceive how shamefully the mode here is a single life. One can scarce be in the company of a dozen men of circumstance and fortune, but what it is odds that you find on inquiry eleven of them are single. The great complaint is the excessive expensiveness of English wives.

I am extremely concerned with you at the misfortune of our friend Mr. Griffith. How could it possibly happen? It was a terrible fire that of Boston. I shall contribute here towards the relief of the sufferers. Our relations have escaped, I believe, generally; but some of my particular friends must have suffered greatly.

Poor David Edwards died this day week, of a consumption. I had a letter from a friend of his, acquainting me that he had been long ill, and incapable of doing his business, and was at board in the country. I feared he might be in straits, as he never was prudent enough to lay up any thing. So I wrote to him immediately, that, if he had occasion, he might draw on me for five guineas. But he died before my letter got to hand. I hear the woman, at whose house he long lodged and boarded, has buried him and taken all he left, which could not be much, and there are some small debts unpaid.

To David Hume, dated  
Coventry, 27  
Sept., 1760. I am obliged to you for the favorable sentiments you express of the pieces sent to you; though the volume relating to our Pennsylvania affairs\* was not written by me, nor any part of it, except the

---

\* The treatise here mentioned is probably the "Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania." Doubts were for a long time entertained as to the authorship of this paper, which, in this letter to Mr. Hume, were finally put to rest, though there is abundant reason for

remarks on the Proprietor's estimate of his estate, and some of the inserted messages and reports of the Assembly, which I wrote when at home, as a member of committees appointed by the House for that service. The rest was by another hand.

But though I am satisfied by what you say, that the Duke of Bedford was hearty in the scheme of the expedition, I am not so clear that others in the administration were equally in earnest in that matter. It is certain, that, after the Duke of Newcastle's first orders to raise troops in the colonies, and promise to send over commissions to the officers, with arms and clothing for the men, we never had another syllable from him for eighteen months; during all which time the army lay idle at Albany for want of orders and necessaries; and it began to be thought at last, that, if an expedition had ever been intended, the first design and the orders given must, through the multiplicity of business here at home, have been quite forgotten.\*

I am not a little pleased to hear of your change of sentiments in some particulars relating to America; because I think it of importance to our general welfare, that the people of this nation should have right notions of us, and I know no one, that has it more in his power to rectify their notions than Mr. Hume. I have lately read with great pleasure, as I do every thing of yours, the excellent Essay on the "Jealousy of Commerce." I think it cannot but have a good effect in promoting a certain interest, too

---

believing that it was written from materials furnished by him, that he revised it for the press, and contributed largely to its circulation. It is composed mainly of documents, and possesses little interest for the reader of to-day; conclusive proof that Franklin had little to do with its composition.—ED.

\* This was the expedition projected against Canada in the year 1746.—S.

little thought of by selfish man, and scarcely ever mentioned, so that we hardly have a name for it; I mean the *interest of humanity*, or common good of mankind. But I hope, particularly from that Essay, an abatement of the jealousy, that reigns here, of the commerce of the colonies, at least so far as such abatement may be reasonable.

I thank you for your friendly admonition relating to some unusual words in the pamphlet. It will be of service to me. The "*pejorate*," and the "*colonize*," since they are not in common use here, I give up as bad; for certainly in writings intended for persuasion and for general information, one cannot be too clear; and every expression in the least obscure is a fault. The "*unshakeable*" too, though clear, I give up as rather low. The introducing new words, where we are already possessed of old ones sufficiently expressive, I confess must be generally wrong, as it tends to change the language; yet, at the same time, I cannot but wish the usage of our tongue permitted making new words, when we want them, by composition of old ones whose meanings are already well understood. The German allows of it, and it is a common practice with their writers. Many of our present English words were originally so made; and many of the Latin words. In point of clearness, such compound words would have the advantage of any we can borrow from the ancient or from foreign languages. For instance, the word *inaccessible*, though long in use among us, is not yet, I dare say, so universally understood by our people, as the word *uncomeatable* would immediately be, which we are not allowed to write. But I hope with you, that we shall always in America make the best English of this Island our standard, and I believe it will be so. I assure you it often gives me pleasure to reflect, how greatly

the *audience* (if I may so term it) of a good English writer will, in another century or two, be increased by the increase of English people in our colonies.\*

My son presents his respects with mine to you and Dr. Monro. We received your printed circular letter to the members of the Society,† and purpose some time next winter to send each of us a little philosophical essay.

To John Baskerville,† dated Craven St., 1760.

Let me give you a pleasant instance of the prejudice some have entertained against your work. Soon after I returned, discoursing with a gentleman concerning the artists of Birmingham, he said you would be a means of blinding all the readers in the nation; for the strokes of your letters, being too thin and narrow, hurt the eye, and he could never read a line of them without pain. "I thought," said I, "you were going to complain of the gloss of the paper, which some object to." "No, no," said he, "I have heard that mentioned,

\* Hume was so struck with this reflection that he is said to have used it to persuade Gibbon to write his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" in English. This letter may be found in the Memoirs of Gibbon.—ED.

† A Philosophical Society lately established at Edinburgh.—ED.

‡ John Baskerville, whose contributions to the art of printing made him famous, but not rich, as will be seen by the following extract from a letter which he wrote to Dr. Franklin, dated Birmingham, September 7th, 1767. Dr. Franklin was at that time on a visit to Paris. "After having obtained the reputation of excelling in the most useful art known to mankind, of which I have your testimony, is it not to the last degree provoking, that I cannot get even bread by it? I must starve, had I no other dependence." He retired from business in 1765, but the Baskerville Press continued to be highly esteemed in Birmingham until the Priestley riots of 1791, when the mob destroyed the printing office. Baskerville died on the 8th of January, 1775. In the year 1779 his types were purchased by a literary society in Paris for £3700, and were employed in printing Beaumarchais's edition of Voltaire.—I. D.

but it is not that ; it is in the form and cut of the letters themselves ; they have not that height and thickness of the stroke, which make the common printing so much the more comfortable to the eye." You see this gentleman was a *connoisseur*. In vain I endeavoured to support your character against the charge ; he knew what he felt, and could see the reason of it, and several other gentlemen among his friends had made the same observation, &c.

Yesterday he called to visit me, when, mischievously bent to try his judgment, I stepped into my closet, tore off the top of Mr. Caslon's specimen, and produced it to him as yours, brought with me from Birmingham ; saying, I had been examining it, since he spoke to me, and could not for my life perceive the disproportion he mentioned, desiring him to point it out to me. He readily undertook it, and went over the several founts, showing me everywhere what he thought instances of that disproportion ; and declared, that he could not then read the specimen, without feeling very strongly the pain he had mentioned to me. I spared him that time the confusion of being told, that these were the types he had been reading all his life, with so much ease to his eyes ; the types his adored Newton is printed with, on which he has pored not a little ; nay, the very types his own book is printed with, (for he is himself an author,) and yet never discovered this painful disproportion in them, till he thought they were yours.

To the printer  
of the London  
Chronicle.\*

I met lately with an old quarto book on a stall, the titlepage and the author's name wanting, but containing discourses, addressed to

---

\* In June of this year, and after a delay of three years, Franklin succeeded in bringing his controversy with the proprietaries to a close, and upon terms



some king of Spain, extolling the greatness of monarchy, translated into English, and said in the last leaf to be printed at London by Bonham Norton and John Bill, "Printers to the King's most excellent Majestie, MDCXXIX." The author appears to have been a Jesuit, for, speaking of that order in two places, he calls it *our Society*. Give me leave to communicate to the public a chapter of it, so *apropos* to our present situation, (only changing Spain for France,) that I think it well worth general attention and observation, as it discovers the arts of our enemies, and may therefore help in some degree to put us on our guard against them.

What effect the artifices here recommended might have had in the times when our author wrote, I cannot pretend to say; but I believe, the present age being more enlightened and our people better acquainted than formerly with our true national interest, such arts can now hardly prove so generally successful; for we may with pleasure observe, and to the honor of the British people, that, though writings and discourses like these have lately not been wanting, yet few in any of the classes he particularizes seem to be affected

---

which received the entire approbation of his constituents, the right of taxing the proprietary estates, the main point in dispute, being fully recognized. He did not, however, return to America until two years later, occupying himself with the advocacy and direction of the expedition against Canada, the annexation of which to the empire he had much at heart, with scientific studies and experiments, and with the manufacture of a sound public opinion in England through the columns of the periodical press. In the latter category should be included this communication to the *London Chronicle*. Its date is not known, but "its contents," says Mr. Sparks, "show it to have been written towards the close of the French war, and probably in 1760, or the year following. Under the disguise of a pretended chapter from an old book, and in the imitation of an antiquated style, he throws out hints suited to attract attention and afford amusement."—ED.

by them, but all ranks and degrees among us persist hitherto in declaring for a vigorous prosecution of the war, in preference to an unsafe, disadvantageous, or dishonorable peace; yet, as a little change of fortune may make such writings more attended to, and give them greater weight, I think the publication of this piece, as it shows the spring from whence these scribblers draw their poisoned waters, may be of public utility.

A BRITON.

“CHAP. XXXIV.

“*On the Meanes of disposing the Enemie to Peace.*

“Warres, with whatsoever Prudence undertaken and conducted, do not always succeed. Many Things out of Man’s Power to governe, such as Dearth of Provision, Tempests, Pestilence, and the like, oftentimes interfering and totally overthrowing the best Designes; so that these Enemies (England and Holland) of our Monarchy though apparently at first the weaker, may by disastrous Events of Warre, on our Parte, become the stronger, and though not in such degree, as to endanger the Bodie of this great Kingdom, yet, by their greater Power of Shipping and Aptness in Sea Affairs, to be able to cut off, if I may so speake, some of its smaller Limbs and Members that are remote therefrom and not easily defended, to wit, our Islands and Colonies in the Indies; thereby however depriving the Bodie of its wonted Nourishment, so that it must thenceforthe languish and grow weake, if those Parts are not recovered, which possibly may by continuance of Warre be found unlikelie to be done. And the Enemie, puffed up with their successes, and hoping still for more, may not be disposed to Peace on such Termes as would be suitable to the honor of your Majestie, and to the

Welfare of your State and Subjects. In such Case, the following Meanes may have good Effect.

“It is well knowne, that these Northerne People, though hardie of Bodie and bold in Fight, be nevertheless, through overmuch Eating and other Intemperance, slowe of Wit, and dull in Understanding, so that they are oftentimes more easilie to be governed and turned by Skill than by Force. There is therefore always Hope, that, by wise Counsel and dexterous Management, those Advantages, which through crosse Accidents in Warre have been lost, may again with Honour be recovered. In this Place I shall say little of the Power of Money secretly distributed among Grandees, or their Friends or Paramours; that Method being in all Ages known and practised. If the *minds* of Enemies can be *changed*, they may be brought to grant willingly and for nothing what much Gold would scarcely have otherwise prevailed to obtaine. Yet, as the procuring this Change is to be by fitte Instruments, some few Doubloones will not unprofitably be distributed by your Majestie. The manner whereof I shall now briefly recite.

“In those Countries, and particularly in England, there are not wanting Menne of Learning, ingenious Speakers and Writers, who are nevertheless in lowe Estate, and pinched by Fortune. These, being privately gained by proper Meanes, must be instructed in their Sermons, Discourses, Writings, Poems, and Songs, to handle and specially inculcate Points like these which followe. Let them magnifie the Blessings of Peace, and enlarge mightilie thereon, which is not unbecoming grave Divines and other Christian Menne. Let them expatiate on the Miseries of Warre, the Waste of Christian Blood, the growing Scarcitie of Labourers and Workmen, the Dearnness of all foreign Wares and

g\*

Merchandise, the Interruption of Commerce, the Captures of Ships, the Increase and great Burthen of Taxes. Let them represent the Warre as an unmeasurable Advantage to Particulars, and to Particulars only, (thereby to excite envie against those, who manage and provide for the same,) while so prejudicial to the Commonweale and People in general. Let them represent the Advantages gained against us, as trivial and of little Import; the Places taken from us, as of small Trade and Produce, inconvenient for Situation, unwholesome for Ayre and Climate, useless to their Nations, and greatlie chargeable to keepe, draining the home Countrie both of Menne and Money.

“Let them urge, that, if a Peace be forced on us, and those Places withheld, it will nourishe secret Griefe and Malice in the King and Grandees of Spain, which will ere long breake forthe in new Warres, when those Places may again be retaken, without the Merit and Grace of restoring them willingly for Peace’ Sake. Let them represent the making or Continuance of Warres, from views of Gaine, to be base and unworthy a brave People, as those made from Views of Ambition are mad and wicked. Let them insinuate, that the Continuance of the present Warre, on their Parte, hath these Ingredients in its Nature. Then let them magnifie the great Power of your Majestie, and the Strength of your Kingdome, the inexhaustible Wealthe of your Mines, the Greatness of your Incomes, and thence your Abilitie of continuing the Warre; hinting withal the new Alliances you may possiblie make; at the same time setting forth the sincere Disposition you have for Peace, and that it is only a Concerne for your Honour, and the Honour of your Realme, that induceth you to insist on the Restitution of the places taken.

“If, with all this, they shrewdly intimate, and cause it to be understood by artful Wordes and believed, that their own Prince is himself in Heart for Peace, on your Majestie’s Termes, and grieved at the Obstinacy and Perverseness of those among his People, who are for continuing the Warre, a marvellous Effect shall by these Discourses and Writings be produced; and a wonderful strong Partie shall your Majestie raise among your Enemies in Favour of the Peace you desire; insomuch that their own Princes and wisest Counsellours will in a Sorte be constrained to yeeld thereto. For, in this Warre of Wordes, the Avarice and Ambition, the Hope and Fears, and all the Crowd of humane Passions will be raised and put in Array to fight for your Interests against the reall and substantiall Interest of their own Countries. The simple and undiscerning Many shall be carried away by the Plausibilitie and Well-seeming of these Discourses; and the Opinions becoming more popular, all the Rich Menne, who have great Possessions, and fear the Continuance of Taxes, and hope Peace will end them, shall be emboldened thereby to crie aloud for Peace; their Dependents, who are many, must do the same.

“All Merchaunts, fearing Loss of Ships and greater Burthens on Trade by further Duties and Subsidies, and hoping greater Profits by the ending of the Warre, shall join in the crie for Peace. All the Usurers and Lenders of Money to the State, who on a Peace hope great Profits on their Bargains, and fear if the Warre be continued the State shall become bankerroute, and unable to pay them; these, who have no small Weighte, shall join the crie for Peace. All, who maligne the bold Conductors of the Warre, and envie the Glorie they may have thereby

obtained; these shall crie aloud for Peace, hoping, that, when the Warre shall cease, such Menne becoming less necessarie shall be more lightly esteemed, and themselves more sought after. All the Officers of the Enemie's Armies and Fleets, who wish for Repose and to enjoy their Salaries or Rewardes in Quietnesse, and without Peril; these, and their Friends and Families, who desire their Safetie and the Solace of their Societie, shall all crie for Peace.

“All those, who be timorous by Nature, amongste whom be reckoned Menne of Learning that lead sedentarie Lives, doing little Exercise of Bodie, and thence obtaining but few and weake Spirits; great Statesmen, whose natural Spirits be exhausted by much Thinking, or depressed by overmuch Feasting; together with all Women, whose Power, weake as they are, is not a little amongste the Menne; these shall incessantly speake for Peace. And finally all Courtiers, who suppose they conforme thereby to the Inclinations of the Prince, (*ad Exemplum Regis*, &c.); all who are in Places, fear to lose them, or hope for better; all who are out of Places, and hope to obtaine them; with all the worldly minded Clergy, who seeke Preferment; these, with all the Weighte of their Character and Influence, shall join the crie for Peace; till it becomes one universal Clamour, and no Sound, but that of Peace, Peace, Peace, shall be heard from every Quarter.

“Then shall your Majestie's Termes of Peace be listened to with much Readinesse, the Places taken from you be willingly restored, and your Kingdome, recovering its Strength, shall only need to waite a few Years for more favourable Occasions, when the Advantages to your Power, proposed by beginning the Warre, but lost by its bad Successe, shall, with better Fortune, be finally obtained.”

To Hugh Roberts, dated London, 26 Feb., 1761. You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto. I wish you would do it oftener. I know they all love and respect you, and regret your absenting yourself so much. People are apt to grow strange, and not understand one another so well, when they meet but seldom. Since we have held that Club, till we are grown gray together, let us hold it out to the end. For my own part, I find I love company, chat, a laugh, a glass, and even a song, as well as ever; and at the same time relish better than I used to do the grave observations and wise sentences of old men's conversation; so that I am sure the Junto will be still as agreeable to me as it ever has been. I therefore hope it will not be discontinued, as long as we are able to crawl together.

To Josiah Quincy, dated London, 8 April, 1761. I received your very obliging letter of December 25th, by the hand of your valuable son, who had before favored me now and then with a kind visit. I congratulate you on his account, as I am sure you must have a great deal of satisfaction in him. His ingenuous, manly, and generous behaviour, in a transaction here with the Society of Arts, gave me great pleasure, as it was much to his reputation.\*

I am glad my weak endeavours for our common interest were acceptable to you and my American friends. I shall be very happy indeed, if any good arises from them. The people in power here do now seem convinced of the truth of the principles I have inculcated, and incline to act upon

---

\* The gentleman here mentioned was Edmund Quincy, eldest son of Josiah Quincy, and brother of the distinguished patriot, Josiah Quincy, Jr. He died at sea, March 31st, 1768, on his homeward voyage from the West Indies, at the age of thirty-five.—ED.

them; but how far they will be able to do so at a peace, is still uncertain, especially as the war in Germany grows daily less favorable to us. My kinsman, Williams, was but ill informed in the account he gave you of my situation here. The Assembly voted me fifteen hundred pounds sterling, when I left Philadelphia, to defray the expense of my voyage, and negotiations in England, since which they have given nothing more, though I have been here near four years. They will, I make no doubt, on winding up the affair, do what is just; but they cannot afford to be extravagant, as that report would make them.

To Edward Pennington,\*  
dated London, 9 May,  
1761.

I enclose you a letter from your kinsman, Mr. Springet Penn, with whom I had no acquaintance until lately, but have the pleasure to find him a very sensible, discreet young man, with excellent dispositions, which makes me the more regret, that the government as well as property of our province should pass out of that line. There has, by his account, been something very mysterious in the conduct of his uncle, Mr. Thomas Penn, towards him. He was his guardian; but, instead of endeavouring to educate him at home under his eye in a manner becoming the elder branch of their house, has from his infancy been endeavouring to get rid of him.

He first proposed sending him to the East Indies. When that was declined, he had a scheme of sending him to Russia; but, the young gentleman's mother absolutely re-

---

\* An eminent merchant of Philadelphia. There was a family connection between his ancestors and William Penn's first wife, whose name before her marriage was Springet.—S.



fusing to let him go out of the kingdom, unless to Pennsylvania to be educated in the college there, he would by no means hear of his going thither, but bound him an apprentice to a county attorney in an obscure part of Sussex, which, after two years' stay, finding that he was taught nothing valuable, nor could see any company that might improve him, he left, and returned to his mother, with whom he has been ever since, much neglected by his uncle, except lately that he has been a little civil, to get him to join in a power of attorney to W. Peters and R. Hockley for the sale of some Philadelphia lots, of which he is told three undivided fourth parts belong to him. But he is not shown the right he has to them; nor has he any plan of their situation, by which he may be advised of their value; nor was he told, till lately, that he had any such right, which makes him suspect that he may have other rights that are concealed from him.

In some letters to his father's eldest brother, Springet Penn, whose heir he is, he finds that Sir William Keith surveyed for him, the said Springet, a manor of seventy-five thousand acres on the Susquehanna, which he called Springetsbury, and would be glad to know what became of that survey, and whether it was ever conveyed away. By searching the records, you may possibly obtain some light in this and other land affairs, that may be for his interest. The good inclinations you have shown towards that interest, in a letter that has been shown to me, encourage me to recommend this matter earnestly to your care and prudence; and the more privately you carry on your inquiries, for the present, the better it will be.

His uncle has lately proposed to him to buy of him Pennsbury manor house, with one thousand acres of the

land near the house, pretending that his principal reason for doing it was not the value of the land, but an inclination he had to possess the ancient home of the head of the family, and a little land round it just to support it. You know the situation of that manor, and can judge whether it would be prudent to sell the part proposed from the rest, and will advise him concerning it. He has refused to treat about it at present, as well as to sign the power of attorney for the sale of the city lots; upon which his late guardian has brought in an account against him, and demands a debt of four hundred pounds, which he urges him to pay, for that, as he says, he very much wants the money, which does not seem to look well.

Not only the Land Office may be searched for warrants and surveys to the young gentleman's ancestors, but also the Record Office for deeds of gift from the first proprietor, and other subsequent grants or conveyances. I may tell you in confidence, that some lawyers are of opinion, that the government was not legally conveyed from the eldest branch to others of the family; but this is to be farther inquired into, and at present it is not to be talked of.

To his wife, I wrote to you just before we left London,  
dated that we were about to make a short tour to  
Utrecht, in  
Holland, 14 Holland. I wrote to you since from Antwerp  
Sep., 1761. in Flanders, and am now to acquaint you, that,  
having seen almost all the principal places, and the things  
worthy of notice, in those two countries, we are on our re-  
turn to London, where we hope to be next Saturday or  
Sunday, that we may not miss the Coronation. At Am-  
sterdam I met with Mr. Crellius and his daughter, that was  
formerly Mrs. Neigh. Her husband, Dr. Neigh, died in

Carolina, and she is married again and lives very well in that city. They treated us with great civility and kindness, and will be so obliging as to forward this letter to you, a ship being bound to New York from Amsterdam. We are in good health, and have had a great deal of pleasure, and received a good deal of information in this tour, that may be useful when we return to America.

**To Miss Mary Stevenson,**  
dated from  
Craven St., 29  
Oct., 1761.

My dear Polly's good mamma bids me write two or three lines, by way of apology for her so long omitting to write. She acknowledges the receiving of two agreeable letters from her beloved daughter, enclosing one for Sally Franklin, which was much approved (excepting one word only) and sent as directed.

The reasons of her not writing are, that her time all day is fully taken up, during the daylight, with the care of her family, and—lying abed in the morning. And her eyes are so bad, that she cannot see to write in the evening—for playing at cards. So she hopes that one, who is all goodness, will certainly forgive her, when her excuses are so substantial. As for the secretary, he has not a word to say in his own behalf, though full as great an offender, but throws himself upon mercy; pleading only that he is, with the greatest esteem and sincerest regard, his dear Polly's ever affectionate friend.

**To Lord Kames,** dated  
London,  
Nov., 1761.

It is long since I have afforded myself the pleasure of writing to you. As I grow in years, I find I grow more indolent, and more apt to procrastinate. I am indeed a bad correspondent; but what avails confession without amendment?

When I come so late with my thanks for your truly valuable "Introduction to the Art of Thinking," can I have any right to inquire after your "Elements of Criticism"? I promise myself no small satisfaction in perusing that work also, when it shall appear. By the first, you sow thick in the young mind the seeds of good sense concerning moral conduct, which, as they grow and are transplanted into life, must greatly adorn the character and promote the happiness of the person. Permit me to say, that I think I never saw more solid, useful matter contained in so small a compass, and yet the method and expression so clear, that the brevity occasions no obscurity. In the other you will, by alluring youth to the practice of learning, strengthen their judgment, improve and enlarge their understanding, and increase their abilities of being useful.

To produce the number of valuable men necessary in a nation for its prosperity, there is much more hope from schemes of *early institution* than from *reformation*. And, as the power of a single man to do national service, in particular situations of influence, is often immensely great, a writer can hardly conceive the good he may be doing, when engaged in works of this kind. I cannot, therefore, but wish you would publish it as soon as your other important employments will permit you to give it the finishing hand.

With these sentiments you will not doubt my being serious in the intention of finishing my "Art of Virtue." It is not a mere ideal work. I planned it first in 1732. I have from time to time made, and caused to be made, experiments of the method with success. The materials have been growing ever since. The form only is now to be given; in which I purpose employing my first leisure, after my return to my *other country*.

Your invitation to make another jaunt to Scotland, and offer to meet us half way *en famille*, was extremely obliging. Certainly I never spent my time anywhere more agreeably, nor have I been in any place, where the inhabitants and their conversation left such lastingly pleasing impressions on my mind, accompanied with the strongest inclination once more to visit that hospitable, friendly, and sensible people. The friendship your Lordship in particular honors me with would not, you may be assured, be among the least of my inducements. My son is in the same sentiments with me. But we doubt we cannot have that happiness, as we are to return to America early in the next spring.

I am ashamed that I have been so useless a member to your *Philosophical Society*, since they did me the honor of admitting me. But I think it will not be long before they hear from me. I should be very glad to see Dr. Cullen's paper on *Fire*. When may we expect the publication? I have, as you have heard, been dealing in *Smoke*, and I think it not difficult to manage, when one is once acquainted thoroughly with the principles. But, as the causes are various, so must the remedies be; and one cannot prescribe to a patient at such a distance, without first having a clear state of its case. If you should ever take the trouble of sending me a description of the circumstances of your smoky chimneys, perhaps I might offer something useful towards their cure. But doubtless you have doctors equally skilful nearer home.

I sent one of your "Principles of Equity" as a present to a particular friend of mine, one of the judges of the Supreme Court in Pennsylvania, where, as there is no court of chancery, equity is often mixed with the common law in their judgments. I since received two letters from him. In

the first, when he had read but part of the work, he seemed to think something wanting in it. In the next, he calls his first sentiments in question. I think I will send you the letters, though of no great importance, lest, since I have mentioned them, you should think his remarks might be of more consequence. You can return them when any friend is coming this way.

To Miss Mary  
Stevenson,  
dated Mon-  
day morning,  
8 March, 1762.

Your good mamma has just been saying to me, that she wonders what can possibly be the reason she has not had a line from you for so long a time. I have made no complaint of that kind, being conscious, that, by not writing myself, I have forfeited all claim to such favor, though no letters give me more pleasure, and I often wish to hear from you; but indolence grows upon me with years, and writing grows more and more irksome to me.

Have you finished your course of philosophy? No more doubts to be resolved? No more questions to ask? If so, you may now be at full leisure to improve yourself in cards. Mamma bids me tell you she is lately much afflicted and half a cripple with the rheumatism. I send you two or three French *Gazettes de Médecine*, which I have just received from Paris, wherein is a translation of the extract of a letter you copied out for me. You will return them with my French letters on Electricity, when you have perused them.

To his wife,  
dated Lon-  
don, 24  
March, 1762.

I condole with you most sincerely on the death of our good mother,\* being extremely sensible of the distress and affliction it must

---

\* Mrs. Read. the mother of Mrs. Franklin — Ed

have thrown you into. Your comfort will be, that no care was wanting on your part towards her, and that she had lived as long as this life could afford her any rational enjoyment. It is, I am sure, a satisfaction to me, that I cannot charge myself with having ever failed in one instance of duty and respect to her during the many years that she called me son. The circumstances attending her death were indeed unhappy in some respects; but something must bring us all to our end, and few of us shall see her length of days. My love to brother John Read, and sister and cousin Debby, and young cousin Johnny Read, and let them all know, that I sympathize with them all affectionately.

This I write in haste, Mr. Beatty having just called on me to let me know, that he is about to set out for Portsmouth, in order to sail for America. I am finishing all business here in order for my return, which will either be in the Virginia fleet, or by the packet of May next; I am not yet determined which. I pray God grant us a happy meeting.

We are all well, and Billy presents his duty. Mr. Strahan has received your letter, and wonders he has not been able to persuade you to come over.

To David  
Hume, dated  
London, 19  
May, 1762.

It is no small pleasure to me to hear from you that my paper on the means of preserving buildings from damage by lightning, was acceptable to the Philosophical Society. Mr. Russel's proposals of improvement are very sensible and just. A leaden spout or pipe is undoubtedly a good conductor, so far as it goes. If the conductor enters the ground just at the foundation, and from thence is carried horizontally to some well, or to a distant rod driven downright into the earth, I would

then propose, that the part under the ground should be lead, as less liable to consume with rust than iron. Because, if the conductor near the foot of the wall should be wasted, the lightning might act on the moisture of the earth, and by suddenly rarefying it occasion an explosion, that may damage the foundation. In the experiment of discharging my large case of electrical bottles through a piece of small glass tube filled with water, the suddenly rarefied water has exploded with a force equal, I think, to that of so much gunpowder; bursting the tube into many pieces, and driving them with violence in all directions and to all parts of the room. The shivering of trees into small splinters, like a broom, is probably owing to this rarefaction of the sap in the longitudinal pores, or capillary pipes, in the substance of the wood. And the blowing up of bricks or stones in a hearth, rending stones out of a foundation, and splitting of walls, are also probably effects sometimes of rarefied moisture in the earth, under the hearth, or in the walls. We should therefore have a durable conductor under ground, or convey the lightning to the earth at some distance.

It must afford Lord Marischal a good deal of diversion to preside in a dispute so ridiculous as that you mention. Judges in their decisions often use precedents. I have somewhere met with one, that is what the lawyers call a *case in point*. The Church people and the Puritans in a country town had once a bitter contention concerning the erecting of a Maypole, which the former desired and the latter opposed. Each party endeavoured to strengthen itself by obtaining the authority of the mayor, directing or forbidding a Maypole. He heard their altercation with great patience, and then gravely determined thus: "You,



that are for having no Maypole, shall have no Maypole; and you, that are for having a Maypole, shall have a Maypole. Get about your business, and let me hear no more of this quarrel." \*

Your compliment of *gold* and *wisdom* is very obliging to me, but a little injurious to your country. The various value of every thing in every part of this world arises, you know, from the various proportions of the quantity to the demand. We are told, that gold and silver in Solomon's time were so plenty, as to be of no more value in his country than the stones in the street. You have here at present just such a plenty of wisdom. Your people are, therefore, not to be censured for desiring no more among them than they have; and if I have *any*, I should certainly carry it where, from its scarcity, it may probably come to a better market.

To Mary Stevenson, dated London, 7 June, 1762. \* \* \* Our ships for America do not sail so soon as I expected; it will be yet five or six weeks before we embark, and leave the old world for the new. I fancy I feel a little like dying saints, who, in parting with those they love in this world, are only comforted with the hope of more perfect happiness in the next. I have, in America, connexions of the most engaging kind; and, happy as I have been in the friendships here contracted, *those* promise me greater and more lasting felicity. But God only knows whether these promises shall be fulfilled.

---

\* Lord Marischal was a person of consideration in Neuchâtel, to whom Dr. Franklin had communicated, through Mr. Hume, a paper containing directions for putting up lightning rods.—S.

To Mary Stevenson, dated Portsmouth, 11 August, 1762.

This is the best paper I can get at this wretched inn, but it will convey what is intrusted to it as faithfully as the finest. It will tell my Polly how much her friend is afflicted, that he must, perhaps, never again see one for whom he has so sincere an affection, joined to so perfect an esteem; who he once flattered himself might become his own, in the tender relation of a child, but can now entertain such pleasing hopes no more.\* Will it tell *how much* he is afflicted? No, it cannot.

Adieu, my dearest child. I will call you so. Why should I not call you so, since I love you with all the tenderness of a father? Adieu. May the God of all goodness shower down his choicest blessings upon you, and make you infinitely happier, than that event would have made you. And, wherever I am, believe me to be, with unalterable affection, my dear Polly, your sincere friend.

To Lord Kames, dated Portsmouth, 17 August, 1762.

I am now waiting here only for a wind to waft me to America, but cannot leave this happy island and my friends in it, without extreme regret, though I am going to a country and a people that I love. I am going from the old world to the new; and I fancy I feel like those, who are leaving this world for the next; grief at the parting; fear of the passage; hope of the future. These different passions all affect their minds at once; and these have *tendered* me down exceedingly. It is usual for the dying to beg forgiveness of their surviving friends, if they have ever offended them.

Can you, my Lord, forgive my long silence, and my not

---

\* This paragraph discloses Franklin's hope that his son William would have married Miss Stevenson.—ED.

acknowledging till now the favor you did me in sending me your excellent book? Can you make some allowance for a fault in others, which you have never experienced in yourself; for the bad habit of postponing from day to day, what one every day resolves to do to-morrow? A habit that grows upon us with years, and whose only excuse is we know not how to mend it. If you are disposed to favor me, you will also consider how much one's mind is taken up and distracted by the many little affairs one has to settle before the undertaking such a voyage, after so long a residence in a country; and how little, in such a situation, one's mind is fitted for serious and attentive reading; which, with regard to the "*Elements of Criticism*," I intended before I should write. I can now only confess and endeavour to amend. In packing up my books, I have reserved yours to read on the passage. I hope I shall therefore be able to write to you upon it soon after my arrival. At present I can only return my thanks, and say that the parts I have read gave me both pleasure and instruction; that I am convinced of your position, new as it was to me, that a good taste in the arts contributes to the improvement of morals; and that I have had the satisfaction of hearing the work universally commended by those who have read it.

And now, my dear Sir, accept my sincere thanks for the kindness you have shown me, and my best wishes of happiness to you and yours. Wherever I am, I shall esteem the friendship you honor me with as one of the felicities of my life; I shall endeavour to cultivate it by a more punctual correspondence; and I hope frequently to hear of your welfare and prosperity.\*

---

\* Dr. Franklin sailed for America immediately after writing this letter, and after a sojourn in England of five years.—ED.

## CHAPTER II.

**His Reception in America—His Son's Marriage, and appointment as Governor of New Jersey—Tour through the Colonies as Postmaster-General—Insurrection of the Indians—Drafts a Militia Bill—Its Rejection by the Governor—Drafts a Petition to the Throne for a Change of Governor—Is Defeated for the Assembly—Sent to England again as Agent of the Colony of Pennsylvania—Parting Advice to his Daughter—Connecticut Religion.**

**1762-1764.**

**To Mr. White-** I THANK you for your kind congratulations  
**ford, dated** on my son's promotion and marriage.\* If he  
**Philadelphia,** makes a good governor and husband, (as I  
**7 Dec., 1762.** hope he will, for I know he has good principles and a good disposition,) these events will both of them give me continual pleasure.

---

\* Dr. Franklin sailed for America towards the end of August, 1762, but did not reach Philadelphia until the 1st of November of that year, and after an absence from his country of five years. A few days before sailing, his son William was named Governor of New Jersey; and very shortly after, somewhat to the father's disappointment we may infer from his last letter to Miss Stevenson, the governor married a young West Indian girl by the name of Dowes. As William had personally no pretensions to an appointment of such dignity, it is not easy to misunderstand the motives of the ministry in making it. The differences between the mother country and the colonies had already assumed such importance as to make it desirable to detach a man of Franklin's influence from the colonial party. The effort to induce

The taking of the Havana, on which I congratulate you, is a conquest of the greatest importance, and will doubtless contribute a due share of weight in procuring us reasonable terms of peace. It has been, however, the dearest conquest, by far, that we have made this war, when we consider the terrible havoc made by sickness in that brave army of veterans, now almost totally ruined.

To Mrs. Catherine Greene,\* friend's favor of December 20th, as it informed dated Philadelphia, 23 me that you and yours are all well. Mrs. Jan., 1763. Franklin admits of your apology for dropping the correspondence with her, and allows your reasons to be good; but hopes, when you have more leisure, it may be resumed. She joins with me in congratulating you on your present happy situation. I thank you for your kind invitation. I purpose a journey into New England in the spring or summer coming. I shall not fail to pay my respects to you and Mr. Greene, when I come your way. Please to make my compliments acceptable to him.

---

him to bring his family to England and settle there having failed, the blandishments of patronage were essayed, with what expectations may be inferred from the following paragraph in a letter from Thomas Penn, one of the proprietaries, to Governor Hamilton:

"I am told you will find Mr. Franklin more tractable, and I believe we shall, in matters of prerogative; as his son must obey instructions, and what he is ordered to do *the father cannot well oppose in Pennsylvania.*"

The artifice had its perfect work upon the son, who, to the infinite chagrin of the father, from that time forth became the servile instrument of the ministry, and in the due course of events a pensioned refugee in London. The ministers were not long in discovering that their compliments had been wasted upon the doctor, whose zeal and vigilance in maintaining the rights of the colonies increased with every new provocation.—ED.

\* Formerly Miss Catherine Ray, married to Mr. William Greene, afterwards Governor of Rhode Island.—ED.

I have had a most agreeable time of it in Europe. I have, in company with my son, been in most parts of England, Scotland, Flanders, and Holland; and generally have enjoyed a good share of health. If you had asked the rest of your questions, I could more easily have made this letter longer. Let me have them in your next. I think I am not much altered; at least my esteem and regard for my Katy (if I may still be permitted to call her so) is the same, and I believe will be unalterable, whilst I am, &c.

To Lord Kames, dated London, June, 1765.\*      You require my history from the time I set sail for America. I left England about the end of August, 1762, in company with ten sail of merchant ships, under a convoy of a man-of-war.† We had a pleasant passage to Madeira, where we were kindly received and entertained; our nation being then in high honor with the Portuguese, on account of the protection we were then affording them against the united invasions of France and Spain. It is a fertile island, and the different heights and situations among its mountains afford such temperaments of air, that all the fruits of northern and southern countries are produced there; corn, grapes, apples, peaches, oranges, lemons, plantains, bananas, &c. Here we furnished ourselves with fresh provisions, and refreshments of all kinds; and, after a few days, proceeded on our voyage, running southward until we got into the trade winds, and then with them westward, till we drew near the coast of America. The weather was so favorable, that there were

---

\* This letter, written after Franklin's return to London, is given here for the sake of its recapitulation of his experiences during his absence from England.—ED.

† England was then at war with France.—ED.

few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board of the man-of-war; which made the time pass agreeably, much more so than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village, with all one's neighbors about one.

On the 1st of November, I arrived safe and well at my own home, after an absence of near six years, found my wife and daughter well; the latter grown quite a woman, with many amiable accomplishments acquired in my absence; and my friends as hearty and affectionate as ever, with whom my house was filled for many days, to congratulate me on my return. I had been chosen yearly during my absence to represent the city of Philadelphia in our provincial Assembly; and, on my appearance in the House, they voted me three thousand pounds sterling for my services in England, and their thanks, delivered by the Speaker. In February following, my son arrived with my new daughter; for, with my consent and approbation, he\* married soon after I left England a very agreeable West India lady, with whom he is very happy. I accompanied him to his government, where he met with the kindest reception from the people of all ranks, and has lived with them ever since in the greatest harmony. A river only parts that province and ours, and his residence is within seventeen miles of me, so that we frequently see each other.

In the spring of 1763, I set out on a tour through all the northern Colonies to inspect and regulate the post-offices in the several provinces. In this journey I spent the summer, travelled about sixteen hundred miles, and did not get

---

\* This apparently superfluous statement is made doubtless to explain his absence from a ceremony which took place only a few days after he left England.—ED.

home till the beginning of November. The Assembly sitting through the following winter, and warm disputes arising between them and the governor, I became wholly engaged in public affairs; for, besides my duty as an Assemblyman, I had another trust to execute, that of being one of the commissioners appointed by law to dispose of the public money appropriated to the raising and paying an army to act against the Indians, and defend the frontiers. And then, in December, we had two insurrections of the back inhabitants of our province, by whom twenty poor Indians were murdered, that had, from the first settlement of the province, lived among us, under the protection of our government. This gave me a good deal of employment; for, as the rioters threatened further mischief, and their actions seemed to be approved by an ever-acting party, I wrote a pamphlet entitled "A Narrative, &c." (which I think I sent to you) to strengthen the hands of our weak government, by rendering the proceedings of the rioters unpopular and odious. This had a good effect; and afterwards, when a great body of them with arms marched towards the capital, in defiance of the government, with an avowed resolution to put to death one hundred and forty Indian converts then under its protection, I formed an Association at the governor's request, for his and their defence, we having no militia. Near one thousand of the citizens accordingly took arms; Governor Penn made my house for some time his head-quarters, and did every thing by my advice; so that, for about forty-eight hours, I was a very great man; as I had been once some years before, in a time of public danger.\*

---

\* This is a reference to the defeat of General Braddock by the French, at the battle of Monongahela. See *ante*, p. 323 *et seq.*—ED.



But the fighting face we put on, and the reasonings we used with the insurgents, (for I went at the request of the governor and council, with three others, to meet and discourse with them,) having turned them back and restored quiet to the city, I became a less man than ever ; for I had, by this transaction, made myself many enemies among the populace ; and the governor, (with whose family our public disputes had long placed me in an unfriendly light, and the services I had lately rendered him not being of the kind that make a man acceptable,) thinking it a favorable opportunity, joined the whole weight of the proprietary interest to get me out of the Assembly ; which was accordingly effected at the last election, by a majority of about twenty-five in four thousand voters. The House, however, when they met in October, approved of the resolutions taken, while I was Speaker, of petitioning the crown for a change of government, and requested me to return to England, to prosecute that petition ; which service I accordingly undertook, and embarked at the beginning of November last, being accompanied to the ship, sixteen miles, by a cavalcade of three hundred of my friends, who filled our sails with their good wishes, and I arrived in thirty days at London.

Here I have been ever since, engaged in that and other public affairs relating to America, which are like to continue some time longer upon my hands ; but I promise you, that when I am quit of these, I will engage in no other ; and that, as soon as I have recovered the ease and leisure I hope for, the task you require of me, of finishing my "*Art of Virtue*," shall be performed. In the mean time, I must request you would excuse me on this consideration, that the powers of the mind are possessed by different men in different degrees, and that every one cannot, like Lord

Kames, intermix literary pursuits and important business without prejudice to either.

I send you herewith two or three other pamphlets of my writing on our political affairs, during my short residence in America;\* but I do not insist on your reading them; for I know you employ all your time to some useful purpose.

To Mary Ste-  
venson, dated  
Philadelphia,  
25 March,  
1763.

Your pleasing favor of November 11th is now before me. It found me, as you supposed it would, happy with my American friends and family about me; and it made me more happy in showing me, that I am not yet forgotten by the dear friends I left in England. And, indeed, why should I fear they will ever forget me, when I feel so strongly that I shall ever remember them?

Of all the enviable things England has, I envy it most its people. Why should that petty Island, which, compared to America, is but like a stepping-stone in a brook, scarce enough of it above water to keep one's shoes dry; why, I say, should that little Island enjoy, in almost every neighbourhood, more sensible, virtuous, and elegant minds, than we can collect in ranging a hundred leagues of our vast forests? But it is said the Arts delight to travel westward. You have effectually defended us in this glorious war, and in time you will improve us. After the first cares for the necessities of life are over, we shall come to think of the embellishments. Already, some of our young geniuses begin to lisp attempts at painting, poetry, and music. We have a young painter now studying at Rome.

---

\* These were "A Narrative of the Late Massacres;" "Cool Thoughts;" and the "Preface to Galloway's Speech."—ED.

Some specimens of our poetry I send you, which, if Dr. Hawkesworth's fine taste cannot approve, his good heart will at least excuse. The manuscript piece is by a young friend of mine, and was occasioned by the loss of one of his friends, who lately made a voyage to Antigua to settle some affairs, previous to an intended marriage with an amiable young lady here, but unfortunately died there. I send it to you, because the author is a great admirer of Mr. Stanley's musical compositions, and has adapted this piece to an air in the sixth *Concerto* of that gentleman, the sweetly solemn movement of which he is quite in raptures with. He has attempted to compose a *recitativo* for it, but, not being able to satisfy himself in the bass, wishes I could get it supplied. If Mr. Stanley would condescend to do that for him, he would esteem it as one of the highest honors, and it would make him excessively happy. You will say that a *recitativo* can be but a poor specimen of our music. It is the best and all I have at present, but you may see better hereafter.

I hope Mr. Ralph's affairs are mended since you wrote. I know he had some expectations, when I came away, from a hand that would help him. He has merit, and one would think ought not to be so unfortunate.

I do not wonder at the behaviour you mention of Dr. S—— towards me, for I have long since known him thoroughly. I made that man my enemy by doing him too much kindness. It is the honestest way of acquiring an enemy. And, since it is convenient to have at least one enemy, who, by his readiness to revile one on all occasions, may make one careful of one's conduct, I shall keep him an enemy for that purpose ; and shall observe your good mother's advice, never again to receive him as a friend.

T\*

She once admired the benevolent spirit breathed in his sermons. She will now see the justness of the lines your laureate Whitehead addressed to his poets, and which I now address to her.

" Full many a peevish, envious, slanderous elf  
Is, in his works, benevolence itself.  
For all mankind, unknown, his bosom heaves;  
He only injures those, with whom he lives.  
Read, then, the man;—does *truth* his actions guide,  
Exempt from *petulance*, exempt from *pride*?  
To social duties does his heart attend,  
As son, as father, husband, brother, *friend*?  
*Do those, who know him, love him?* If they do,  
You've *my* permission, you may love him too."

Nothing can please me more, than to see your philosophical improvements, when you have leisure to communicate them to me. I still owe you a long letter on that subject, which I shall pay. I am vexed with Mr. James, that he has been so dilatory in Mr. Madison's *Armonica*. I was unlucky in both the workmen, that I permitted to undertake making those instruments. The first was fanciful, and never could work to the purpose, because he was ever conceiving some new improvement, that answered no end. The other I doubt is absolutely idle. I have recommended a number to him from hence, but must stop my hand.

Adieu, my dear Polly, and believe me, as ever, with the sincerest esteem and regard, your truly affectionate friend and humble servant.

To his wife,  
dated New  
York, 16 June,  
1763.

We left Woodbridge on Tuesday morning, and went to Elizabethtown, where I found our children returned from the Falls, and very

well. The Corporation were to have a dinner that day at the Point for their entertainment, and prevailed on us to stay. There were all the principal people, and a great many ladies. After dinner we set out, and got here before dark. We waited on the governor and on General Amherst yesterday; dined with Lord Stirling; went in the evening to my old friend Mr. Kennedy's funeral; and are to dine with the general to-day. Mr. Hughes and daughter are well, and Betsey Holt. I have not yet seen B. Mecom, but shall to day. I am very well.

I purpose to take Sally at all events, and write for her to-day to be ready to go in the packet that sails next Friday week.\* If there is no other suitable company, Mr. Parker will go with her and take care of her. I am glad you sent some wax candles with the things to Boston. I am now so used to them, that I cannot well do without them. You spent your Sunday very well, but I think you should go oftener to church. I approve of your opening all my English letters, as it must give you pleasure to see, that people, who knew me there so long and so intimately, retain so sincere a regard for me.

To Mrs. Catherine Greene,  
dated Boston,  
5 Sept., 1763.

I am almost ashamed to tell you, that I have had another fall, and put my shoulder out. It is well reduced again, but is still affected with

---

\* Franklin was about setting out upon a five months tour through the northern colonies for the inspection of the post-offices. He traveled about sixteen hundred miles, accompanied by his daughter, in a light carriage, driving himself. A saddle-horse made a part of the equipage, on which Sally rode most of the way from Rhode Island to Philadelphia. He was suffering at this time from a pain in the breast, which was aggravated by a succession of accidental falls, to which allusion is made in several of his letters written at this period. It passed away, however, soon after his return to Philadelphia.

constant, though not very acute pain. I am not yet able to travel rough roads, and must lie by awhile, as I can neither hold reins nor whip with my right hand till it grows stronger.

Do you think, after this, that even your kindest invitations and Mr. Greene's can prevail with me to venture myself again on such roads? And yet it would be a great pleasure to me to see you and yours once more. Sally and my sister Mecom thank you for your remembrance of them, and present their affectionate regards. My best respects to good Mr. Greene, Mrs. Ray, and love to your little ones. I am glad to hear they are well, and that your Celia goes alone. I am, dear friend, yours affectionately.

To George  
Whitefield,  
dated Philadelphia, 19  
June, 1764.

Your frequently repeated wishes for my eternal, as well as my temporal happiness, are very obliging, and I can only thank you for them and offer you mine in return. I have myself no doubt, that I shall enjoy as much of both as is proper for me. That Being, who gave me existence, and through almost threescore years has been continually showering his favors upon me, whose very chastisements have been blessings to me; can I doubt that he loves me? And, if he loves me, can I doubt that he will go on to take care of me, not only here but hereafter? This to some may seem presumption; to me it appears the best grounded hope; hope of the future built on experience of the past.

To Mrs. Mecom, dated  
Philadelphia,  
Nov., 1764.

\* \* \* I find myself at present quite clear from pain, and so have at length left off the cold bath. There is, however, still some weakness in my shoulder, though much stronger than when I left

Boston, and mending. I am otherwise very happy in being at home, where I am allowed to know when I have eat enough and drunk enough, am warm enough, and sit in a place that I like, &c., and nobody pretends to know what I feel better than I do myself. Don't imagine that I am a whit the less sensible of the kindness I experienced among my friends in New England. I am very thankful for it, and shall always retain a grateful remembrance of it.

To his daughter Sarah,  
dated Reedy  
Island,\* 7 at  
night, 8 Nov.,  
1764.

We got down here at sunset, having taken in more live stock at Newcastle, with some other things we wanted. Our good friends, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. James, came

---

\* Recent disorders in the province convinced Governor John Penn, who, in October, 1763, had succeeded Governor Hamilton, that the civil power required strengthening, and he recommended a militia law for the embodiment of all able-bodied citizens for the public defence. The Assembly cheerfully accepted the suggestion, and a committee of which Franklin was a member reported a suitable bill, one of the clauses of which gave the governor the choice of any one of three persons named by each company and regiment for officers. It also fixed the scale of fines, and provided for the trial of offenders by judges and juries in the courts of law.

The governor refused his signature to this bill, claiming for himself the sole power of appointing officers, increasing the scale of fines, requiring all trials to be by court-martial, and making some offences punishable with death.

The Assembly was shocked by these proposals, and would not listen to them for a moment. The bill was lost. The ill feeling engendered by this dispute was aggravated by another which soon followed. To meet the expenses of the Indian war, it was proposed to raise £50,000 on bills of credit, for the partial redemption of which a land tax was to be laid.

By virtue of the decision made by the king in council, at Franklin's solicitation, the located uncultivated lands of the proprietaries were not to be assessed higher than the lowest rate at which any located uncultivated lands belonging to the inhabitants should be assessed,—that is, as the Assembly interpreted it, the proprietary lands were not to be rated higher than lands of a similar quality belonging to other persons. Availing himself of an ambiguity in the expression, the governor insisted that all the proprietary lands, whatever their quality, were to be assessed at the lowest rates.

with me in the ship from Chester to Newcastle, and went ashore there. It was kind to favor me with their good company as far as they could. The affectionate leave taken

---

The greater impending danger from the savages compelled the Assembly to submit to this pettifogging construction, and they passed the act on the governor's terms. Neither he nor the Assembly then suspected that the concession he had extorted, and to which they had been forced to submit, was to result in rebellion, revolution, and the independence of the colonies.

Before adjourning, the Assembly, in a series of resolutions, expressed their belief that the peace and happiness of the province could never be restored till the power of governing it was lodged directly in the crown.

These resolutions were found to have correctly interpreted the sentiments of the people; for when the Assembly met again, some seven weeks later, petitions to the king for a change of government came in from more than three thousand of the inhabitants.

The Assembly, encouraged by these manifestations, decided by a large majority to unite in a petition for the same object drafted by Franklin himself, who, at the same time, was chosen Speaker in the place of Norris, who hesitated to affix his signature to such a document.

Pending these proceedings, the British ministry had signified its intention to raise a revenue from stamp duties in the colonies. The Assembly, participating in the excitement which this intelligence caused throughout the country, sent to Mr. Jackson, then agent of the colony of Pennsylvania in London, a remonstrance against the scheme, as tending to deprive the people of their most essential rights as British subjects. The signing of these instructions was Dr. Franklin's last act as Speaker of the Assembly.

The election which took place in the autumn of this year, 1764, turned on the question of a change in the government, and though the proprietary party succeeded by a majority of twenty-five votes out of four thousand in depriving Franklin of the seat to which he had been chosen for fourteen years in succession, it proved to them a barren victory, for as soon as the Assembly convened, it not only resolved to prosecute the measures and policy of the previous Assembly, but to send Franklin as a special agent to England to take charge of their petition for a change of government, and to look after all the interests of the province abroad.

The Assembly promptly voted that a provision for the doctor's expenses should be made in the next money bill, upon the strength of which the merchants subscribed £1100 towards his expenses in a few hours, and on the 7th of November, and only twelve days after his appointment, he was on his way again to England, accompanied as far as Chester, where he



ot me by so many friends at Chester was very endearing. God bless them and all Pennsylvania.

My dear child, the natural prudence and goodness of heart God has blest you with make it less necessary for me to be particular in giving you advice. I shall therefore only say, that the more attentively dutiful and tender you are towards your good mamma, the more you will recommend yourself to me. But why should I mention *me*, when you have so much higher a promise in the commandments, that such conduct will recommend you to the favor of God. You know I have many enemies, all indeed on the public account, (for I cannot recollect that I have in a private capacity given just cause of offence to any one whatever,) yet they are enemies, and very bitter ones; and you must expect their enmity will extend in some degree to you, so that your slightest indiscretions will be magnified into crimes, in order the more sensibly to wound and afflict me. It is therefore the more necessary for you to be extremely circumspect in all your behaviour, that no advantage may be given to their malevolence.

Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer Book is your principal business there, and if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart than sermons generally can do. For they were composed by men of much greater piety and

---

was to board his vessel, by an escort of some three hundred of his fellow-citizens.

After a tempestuous voyage of thirty days, he landed at Portsmouth, proceeded at once to London, and on the night of the 10th of December was installed again in his old lodgings with Mrs. Stevenson, in Craven Street. It was on his voyage down the Delaware, that he addressed this letter of the 8th November to his daughter Sally.—ED.

wisdom, than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish you would never miss the prayer days; yet I do not mean you should despise sermons, even of the preachers you dislike, for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth. I am the more particular on this head, as you seemed to express a little before I came away some inclination to leave our church, which I would not have you do.

For the rest, I would only recommend to you in my absence, to acquire those useful accomplishments, arithmetic and book-keeping. This you might do with ease, if you would resolve not to see company on the hours you set apart for those studies.

We expect to be at sea to-morrow, if this wind holds; after which I shall have no opportunity of writing to you, till I arrive (if it please God I do arrive) in England. I pray that his blessing may attend you, which is worth more than a thousand of mine, though they are never wanting.

To Jared Ingersoll, dated Philadelphia, Dec. 11, 1762.

I should be glad to know what it is that distinguishes Connecticut religion from common religion:—communicate, if you please, some of these particulars that you think will amuse me as a virtuoso. When I traveled in Flanders I thought of your excessively strict observation of Sunday; and that a man could hardly travel on that day among you upon his lawful occasions without hazard of punishment, while where I was every one traveled, if he pleased, or diverted himself in any other way; and in the afternoon both high and low went to the play or the opera, where there was plenty of singing, fiddling, and dancing. I looked round for God's judgments but saw no signs of them. The cities were well built and full of inhabitants, the markets filled with plenty, the people well favoured and well clothed; the fields well tilled; the cattle fat and strong; the fences, houses and windows all in repair; and no *Old Tenor* anywhere in the country,—which would almost make one suspect that the Deity is not so angry at that offence as a New England Justice.

### CHAPTER III.

Jealousy of English Manufacturers—Origin of the Stamp Act—Opposition of Franklin—Effect of its Passage in America—Names a Stamp Distributor—Unpleasant Consequences—Correspondence with Dean Tucker.

1764-1766.

To the editor  
of a news-  
paper, dated  
Monday, 20  
May, 1765.\*

SIR,—In your paper of Wednesday last, an ingenious correspondent who calls himself THE SPECTATOR, and dates from *Pimlico*, under the guise of good will to the news-writers,

---

\* In expelling the French from Canada, and leaving the English sole masters of America, the peace of 1763 rather complicated than simplified the relations of the mother country with her colonies. The fear of the French had made the colonists submit to much injustice from England for the sake of her protection, while England was not only pleased with the advantageous markets she found in her American possessions, but greatly dependent upon the colonial militia for their defence.

As soon, however, as the war with France terminated, the English shippers and manufacturers began to complain of transatlantic competition in their business. Even Mr. Pitt, who had boldly defended the political liberties of the colonies, did not scruple to declare that if they were to manufacture so much as a horseshoe, they should feel the whole weight of British power. Selfishness and ignorance invented, and the press gave currency to, the most absurd stories about the danger to British industry from these sources. The character of these inventions and the mischievous effect they were working upon the public mind may be inferred from this specimen of the communications to the press, with which Franklin strove to counteract them. No one knew better when ridicule was the most powerful weapon of controversy.—ED.

whom he calls a "useful body of men in this great city," has, in my opinion, artfully attempted to turn them and their works into ridicule, wherein, if he could succeed, great injury might be done to the public as well as to these good people.

Supposing, Sir, that the "*we hears*" they give us of this or the other intended tour or voyage of this and the other great personage were mere inventions, yet they at least offer us an innocent amusement while we read, and useful matter for conversation when we are disposed to converse.

Englishmen, Sir, are too apt to be silent when they have nothing to say, and too apt to be sullen when they are silent; and, when they are sullen, to hang themselves. But, by these *we hears*, we are supplied with abundant funds for discourse. We discuss the motives for such voyages, the probability of their being undertaken, and the practicability of their execution. Here we display our judgment in politics, our knowledge of the interests of princes, and our skill in geography, and (if we have it) show our dexterity in argumentation. In the mean time, the tedious hour is killed, we go home pleased with the applauses we have received from others, or at least with those we give to ourselves; we sleep soundly, and live on, to the comfort of our families. But, Sir, I beg leave to say, that all the articles of news that seem improbable are not mere inventions. Some of them, I can assure you on the faith of a traveller, are serious truths. And here, quitting Mr. Spectator of Pimlico, give me leave to instance the various accounts the news-writers have given us, with so much honest zeal for the welfare of *Poor Old England*, of the establishing manufactures in the colonies to the prejudice

of those of the kingdom. It is objected by superficial readers, who yet pretend to some knowledge of those countries, that such establishments are not only improbable, but impossible, for that their sheep have but little wool, not in the whole sufficient for a pair of stockings a year to each inhabitant; that, from the universal dearness of labor among them, the working of iron and other materials, except in a few coarse instances, is impracticable to any advantage.

Dear Sir, do not let us suffer ourselves to be amused with such groundless objections. The very tails of the American sheep are so laden with wool, that each has a little car or wagon on four little wheels, to support and keep it from trailing on the ground. Would they caulking their ships, would they even litter their horses with wool, if it were not both plenty and cheap? And what signifies the dearness of labor, when an English shilling passes for five and twenty? Their engaging three hundred silk throwsters here in one week for New York was treated as a fable, because, forsooth, they have "no silk there to throw." Those, who make this objection, perhaps do not know, that, at the same time the agents from the King of Spain were at Quebec to contract for one thousand pieces of cannon to be made there for the fortification of Mexico, and at New York engaging the usual supply of woollen floor-carpets for their West India houses, other agents from the emperor of China were at Boston treating about an exchange of raw silk for wool, to be carried in Chinese junks through the Straits of Magellan.

And yet all this is as certainly true, as the account said to be from Quebec, in all the papers of last week, that the inhabitants of Canada are making preparations for a cod

and whale fishery this "summer in the upper Lakes." Ignorant people may object, that the upper Lakes are fresh, and that cod and whales are salt water fish ; but let them know, Sir, that cod, like other fish when attacked by their enemies, fly into any water where they can be safest ; that whales, when they have a mind to eat cod, pursue them wherever they fly ; and that the grand leap of the whale in the chase up the Falls of Niagara is esteemed, by all who have seen it, as one of the finest spectacles in nature. Really, Sir, the world is grown too incredulous. It is like the pendulum ever swinging from one extreme to another. Formerly every thing printed was believed, because it was in print. Now things seem to be disbelieved for just the very same reason. Wise men wonder at the present growth of infidelity. They should have considered, when they taught the people to doubt the authority of newspapers and the truth of predictions in the almanacs, that the next step might be a disbelief of the well vouched accounts of ghosts and witches, and doubts even of the truths of the Creed.

Thus much I thought it necessary to say in favor of an honest set of writers, whose comfortable living depends on collecting and supplying the printers with news at the small price of sixpence an article, and who always show their regard to truth, by contradicting in a subsequent article such as are wrong, for another sixpence, to the great satisfaction and improvement of us coffee-house students in history and politics, and all future Livys, Rapins, Robertsons, Humes, and Macaulays, who may be sincerely inclined to furnish the world with that *rara avis*, a true history. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

A TRAVELLER.

Letter to a person unknown, concerning the probability and effects of a union with Great Britain, and concerning the repeal or suspension of the Stamp Act, dated London, Jan. 6, 1766.

SIR,—I have attentively perused the paper you sent me, and am of opinion, that the measure it proposes, of an union with the colonies, is a wise one; but I doubt it will hardly be thought so here, till it is too late to attempt it. The time has been, when the colonies would have esteemed it a great advantage, as well as honor to be permitted to send members to Parliament; and would have asked for that privilege, if they could have had the least hopes of obtaining it. The time is now come, when they are indifferent about it, and will probably not ask it, though they might accept it if offered them; and the time will come, when they will certainly refuse it. But if such an union were now established (which methinks it highly imports this country to establish) it would probably subsist as long as Britain shall continue a nation. This people, however, is too proud, and too much despises the Americans, to bear the thought of admitting them to such an equitable participation in the government of the whole.

Then the next best thing seems to be, leaving them in the quiet enjoyment of their respective constitutions; and when money is wanted for any public service, in which they ought to bear a part, calling upon them by requisitorial letters from the crown (according to the long-established custom) to grant such aids as their loyalty shall dictate, and their abilities permit. The very sensible and benevolent author of that paper seems not to have known, that such a constitutional custom subsists, and has always hitherto been practised in America; or he would not have expressed himself in this manner; “It is evident, beyond a

doubt, to the intelligent and impartial, that after the very extraordinary efforts, which were effectually made by Great Britain in the late war to save the colonists from destruction, and attended of necessity with an enormous load of debts in consequence, that the same colonists, now firmly secured from foreign enemies, should be somehow induced to contribute some proportion towards the exigencies of state in future." This looks as if he conceived the war had been carried on at the sole expense of Great Britain, and the colonies only reaped the benefit, without hitherto sharing the burden, and were therefore now indebted to Britain on that account. And this is the same kind of argument that is used by those, who would fix on the colonies the heavy charge of unreasonableness and ingratitude, which I think your friend did not intend.

Please to acquaint him, then, that the fact is not so ; that, every year during the war, requisitions were made by the crown on the colonies for raising money and men ; that accordingly they made more extraordinary efforts, in proportion to their abilities, than Britain did ; that they raised, paid, and clothed, for five or six years, near twenty-five thousand men, besides providing for other services, as building forts, equipping guard-ships, paying transports, &c. And that this was more than their fair proportion is not merely an opinion of mine, but was the judgment of government here, in full knowledge of all the facts ; for the then ministry, to make the burthen more equal, recommended the case to Parliament, and obtained a reimbursement to the Americans of about two hundred thousand pounds sterling every year ; which amounted only to about two-fifths of their expense ; and great part of the rest lies still a load of debt upon them ; heavy taxes on all



their estates, real and personal, being laid by acts of their assemblies to discharge it, and yet will not discharge it in many years.

While, then, these burdens continue; while Britain restrains the colonies in every branch of commerce and manufactures that she thinks interferes with her own; while she drains the colonies, by her trade with them, of all the cash they can procure by every art and industry in any part of the world, and thus keeps them always in her debt; (for they can make no law to discourage the importation of your to *them* ruinous superfluities, as *you* do the superfluities of France; since such a law would immediately be reported against by your Board of Trade, and repealed by the crown;) I say, while these circumstances continue, and while there subsists the established method of royal requisitions for raising money on them by their own assemblies on every proper occasion; can it be necessary or prudent to distress and vex them by taxes laid here, in a Parliament wherein they have no representative, and in a manner which they look upon to be unconstitutional and subversive of their most valuable rights? And are they to be thought unreasonable and ungrateful if they oppose such taxes?

Wherewith, they say, shall we show our loyalty to our gracious King, if our money is to be given by others, without asking our consent? And, if the Parliament has a right thus to take from us a penny in the pound, where is the line drawn that bounds that right, and what shall hinder their calling, whenever they please, for the other nineteen shillings and eleven pence? Have we then any thing that we can call our own? It is more than probable, that bringing representatives from the colonies to sit and act

here as members of Parliament, thus uniting and consolidating your dominions, would in a little time remove these objections and difficulties, and make the future government of the colonies easy ; but, till some such thing is done, I apprehend no taxes, laid there by Parliament here, will ever be collected, but such as must be stained with blood ; and I am sure the profit of such taxes will never answer the expense of collecting them, and that the respect and affection of the Americans to this country will in the struggle be totally lost, perhaps never to be recovered ; and therewith all the commercial and political advantages, that might have attended the continuance of this respect and this affection.

In my own private judgment, I think an immediate repeal of the Stamp Act would be the best measure for this country ; but a suspension of it for three years, the best for that. The repeal would fill them with joy and gratitude, reëstablish their respect and veneration for Parliament, restore at once their ancient and natural love for this country, and their regard for every thing that comes from it ; hence the trade would be renewed in all its branches ; they would again indulge in all the expensive superfluities you supply them with, and their own new-assumed home industry would languish. But the suspension, though it might continue their fears and anxieties, would at the same time keep up their resolutions of industry and frugality ; which in two or three years would grow into habits, to their lasting advantage. However, as the repeal will probably not be now agreed to, from what I think a mistaken opinion, that the honor and dignity of government is better supported by persisting in a wrong measure once entered into, than by rectifying an error as soon as it is discovered ; we must

allow the next best thing for the advantage of both countries, is the suspension; for, as to executing the act by force, it is madness, and will be ruin to the whole.

To William  
Alexander,  
dated Passy,  
March 12,  
1778.\*

In the pamphlet you were so kind as to lend me, there is one important fact misstated, apparently from the writer's not having been furnished with good information; it is the transaction between Mr. Grenville and the colonies, wherein he understands that Mr. Grenville demanded of them a specific sum, that they refused to grant anything, and that it was on their refusal only, that he made the motion for the Stamp Act. No one of these particulars is true. The fact was this. Some time in the winter of 1763-64, Mr. Grenville called together the agents of the several colonies, and told them that he proposed to draw a revenue from America, and to that end his intention was to levy a stamp duty on the colonies by act of Parliament in the ensuing session, of which he thought it fit that they should be immediately acquainted, that they might have time to consider, and, if any other duty equally productive would be more agreeable to them, they might let him know it. The agents were therefore directed to write this to their

---

\* Nor were the fiscal ideas of the British ministry less fatal than those of the shippers and manufacturers to the liberty and prosperity of the colonies. Mr. Grenville insisted upon deriving a revenue from the colonies, and had suggested a stamp duty. The very rumor of such a purpose spread alarm throughout the colonies, and provoked from them a unanimous remonstrance. Dr. Franklin was distinctly instructed by the Assembly of Pennsylvania to neglect no effort to prevent the passage of such an act. How faithfully and successfully he executed these instructions transpires from his correspondence, to which this letter, written some fourteen years later from Passy, forms a fitting introduction.—ED.

respective Assemblies, and communicate to him the answers they should receive ; the agents wrote accordingly. I was a member in the Assembly of Pennsylvania when this notification came to hand. The observations there made upon it were, that the ancient, established, and regular method of drawing aid from the colonies was this. The occasion was always first considered by their sovereign in his privy council, by whose sage advice he directed his secretary of state to write circular letters to the several governors, who were directed to lay them before their assemblies. In these letters the occasion was explained for their satisfaction, with gracious expressions of his majesty's confidence in their known duty and affection, on which he relied, that they would grant such sums as should be suitable to their abilities, loyalty, and zeal for his service. That the colonies had always granted liberally on such requisitions, and so liberally during the late war, that the king, sensible that they had granted much more than their proportion, had recommended it to Parliament, five years successively, to make them some compensation, and the Parliament accordingly returned them two hundred thousand pounds a year, to be divided among them. That the proposition of taxing them in Parliament was therefore both cruel and unjust. That, by the constitution of the colonies, their business was with the *king*, in matters of aid ; they had nothing to do with any *financier*, nor he with them ; nor were the agents the proper channels through which requisitions should be made : it was therefore improper for them to enter in any stipulation, or make any proposition, to Mr. Grenville about laying taxes on their constituents by Parliament, which had really no right at all to tax them, especially as the notice he had sent them did not appear to be by the king's order, and

perhaps was without his knowledge ; as the king, when he would obtain anything from them, always accompanied his requisition with good words ; but this gentleman, instead of a decent demand, sent them a notice, that they should certainly be taxed, and only left them the choice of the manner. But, all this notwithstanding, they were so far from refusing to grant money, that they resolved to the following purpose ; That, as they always had, so they always should think it “ their duty to grant aid to the crown, according to their abilities, whenever required of them in the usual constitutional manner.”

I went soon after to England, and took with me an authentic copy of this resolution, which I presented to Mr. Grenville before he brought in the Stamp Act. I asserted in the House of Commons, (Mr. Grenville being present,) that I had done so, and he did not deny it. Other colonies made similar resolutions. And, had Mr. Grenville, instead of that act, applied to the king in council for such requisitional letters, letters to be circulated by the secretary of state, I am sure he would have obtained more money from the colonies by their voluntary grants, than he himself expected from his stamps. But he chose compulsion rather than persuasion, and would not receive from their good will what he thought he could obtain without it. And thus the golden bridge, which the ingenious author thinks the Americans unwisely and unbecomingly refused to hold out to the minister and Parliament, was actually held out to them, but they refused to walk over it. This is the true history of that transaction ; and, as it is probable there may be another edition of that excellent pamphlet, I wish this may be communicated to the candid author, who I doubt not will correct that error.

To Josiah TUCKER,\* dated London, 12 Feb., 1774. REVEREND SIR,—Being informed that some severe strictures on my conduct and character had appeared in a new book published under your respectable name, I purchased and read it. After thanking you for those parts of it that are so instructive on points of great importance to the common interest of mankind, permit me to complain, that, if by the description you give in pages 180, 181, of a certain American patriot,

---

\* The proposition made to the colonies by Mr. Grenville, says M. Laboulaye, much resembles the one which, twenty years later, M. de Calonne addressed to the Assembly of Notables, and which a piquant caricature represented by a ministerial orator addressing a flock of turkeys in the following terms: "Gentlemen, I have invited you to meet me to know with what sauce you would prefer to be eaten." "But we do not wish to be eaten," reply the honorable notables. "Gentlemen," retorted the minister, "you dodge the question." The colonists were either to submit to a stamp duty or to anything else they preferred that would yield an equivalent of revenue, but be taxed they should, and that too, contrary to the fundamental principles and policy of the British Constitution, without representation. The proposal and its alternative were universally rejected by the colonists, but the ministry were needy, felt strong, and were far from appreciating the strength of the sentiment they were outraging. They passed the Stamp Act, despite the firm remonstrances of the American Assemblies and the strenuous opposition of Franklin. To mitigate the ill feeling such a measure was likely to provoke,—and when it became known to the colonists their indignation knew no bounds,—Mr. Grenville invited the colonial agents in London to name such persons in the respective colonies as they deemed suitable for the office of stamp distributors. All the agents fell into the trap, not excepting the wary doctor himself, who named his old friend John Hughes for Pennsylvania. This qualified sanction of the offensive act became the source of much annoyance to him. His enemies appealed to it as evidence of his infidelity to the interests of the colonies. They represented him as having encouraged the offensive legislation, and as having applied for the position of stamp distributor. Dr. Tucker, then Dean of Worcester, a fervent and rather meddlesome parson, of whom Warburton is reported to have said, "his trade of a dean is his religion, and his religion is a trade," in a treatise which he felt called upon to publish on the colonial troubles, reiterated these charges. The correspondence that follows was one of the consequences.—ED.

whom you say you need not name, you do, as is supposed, mean myself, nothing can be further from the truth than your assertion, that I applied or used any interest, directly or indirectly, to be appointed one of the stamp officers for America. I certainly never expressed a wish of the kind to any person whatever; much less was I, as you say, "more than ordinarily assiduous on this head." I have heretofore seen in the newspapers insinuations of the same import, naming me expressly; but, being without the name of the writer, I took no notice of them.

I know not whether they were yours, or were only your authority for your present charge; but now they have the weight of your name and dignified character, I am more sensible of the injury; and I beg leave to request, that you will reconsider the grounds on which you have ventured to publish an accusation, that, if believed, must prejudice me extremely in the opinion of good men, especially in my own country, whence I was sent expressly to oppose the imposition of that tax. If on such reconsideration and inquiry you find, as I am persuaded you will, that you have been imposed upon by false reports, or have too lightly given credit to hearsays in a matter that concerns another's reputation, I flatter myself that your equity will induce you to do me justice, by retracting that accusation. In confidence of this, I am, with great esteem, Reverend Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Benjamin  
Franklin, da-  
ted Monday,  
21 Feb., 1774.

SIR,—The letter which you did me the honor to send to Gloucester, I have just received in London, where I have resided many weeks, and am now returning to Gloucester. On inquiry, I find that I was mistaken in *some circumstances* relating

to your conduct about the Stamp Act, though right as to the *substance*. These errors shall be rectified the first opportunity. After having assured you, that I am no dealer in *anonymous* newspaper paragraphs, nor have a connexion with any who are, I have the honor to be, Sir, your humble servant,

J. TUCKER.

To Josiah  
Tucker, dated  
Tuesday, 22  
Feb., 1774.

REVEREND SIR,—I received your favor of yesterday. If the *substance* of what you have charged me with is right, I can have but little concern about any mistakes in the *circumstances*; whether they are rectified or not, will be immaterial. But, knowing the substance to be wrong, and believing that you can have no desire of continuing in an error, prejudicial to any man's reputation, I am persuaded you will not take it amiss, if I request you to communicate to me the particulars of the information you have received, that I may have an opportunity of examining them; and I flatter myself I shall be able to satisfy you that they are groundless. I propose this method as more decent than a public altercation, and suiting better the respect due to your character. With great regard, I have the honor to be, Reverend Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

To Benjamin  
Franklin, da-  
ted Gloucester,  
24 Feb.,  
1774.

SIR,—The request made in your last letter is so very just and reasonable, that I shall comply with it very readily. It has long appeared to me, that you much exceeded the bounds of morality in the methods you pursued for the advancement of the supposed interests of America. If it can be proved, that I have unjustly suspected you, I shall acknowledge my error with as much satisfaction as you can



have in reading my recantation of it. As to the case more immediately referred to in your letters, I was repeatedly informed, that you had solicited the late Mr. George Grenville for a place or agency in the distribution of stamps in America. From which circumstance I myself concluded, that you had made interest for it on your own account; whereas I am now informed, there are no positive proofs of your having solicited to obtain such a place for yourself, but that there is sufficient evidence still existing of your having applied for it in favor of another person. If this latter should prove to be the fact, as I am assured it will, I am willing to suppose, from several expressions in both your letters, that you will readily acknowledge that the difference in this case between yourself and your friend, is very immaterial to the general merits of the question. But, if you should have distinctions in this case, which are above my comprehension, I shall content myself with observing, that your great abilities and happy discoveries deserve universal regard; and that, as on these accounts I respect and esteem you, so I have the honor to be, Sir, your very humble servant,

J. TUCKER.

To Josiah Tucker, dated London, 26 Feb., 1774. REVEREND SIR,—I thank you for the frankness with which you have communicated to me the particulars of the information you had received, relating to my supposed application to Mr. Grenville for a place in the American stamp-office. As I deny that either your former or latter informations are true, it seems incumbent on me, for your satisfaction, to relate all the circumstances fairly to you, that could possibly give rise to such mistakes.

Some days after the Stamp Act was passed, to which I

had given all the opposition I could, with Mr. Grenville, I received a note from Mr. Whately, his secretary, desiring to see me the next morning. I waited upon him accordingly, and found with him several other colony agents. He acquainted us, that Mr. Grenville was desirous to make the execution of the act as little inconvenient and disagreeable to America as possible; and therefore did not think of sending stamp officers from this country, but wished to have discreet and reputable persons appointed in each province from among the inhabitants, such as would be acceptable to them; for, as they were to pay the tax, he thought strangers should not have the emolument. Mr. Whately therefore wished us to name for our respective colonies, informing us, that Mr. Grenville would be obliged to us for pointing out to him honest and responsible men, and would pay great regard to our nominations. By this plausible and apparently candid declaration, we were drawn in to nominate; and I named for our province Mr. Hughes, saying, at the same time, that I knew not whether he would accept of it, but, if he did, I was sure he would execute the office faithfully. I soon after had notice of his appointment. We none of us, I believe, foresaw or imagined, that this compliance with the request of the minister would or could have been called an *application* of ours, and adduced as a proof of our *approbation* of the act we had been opposing; otherwise I think few of us would have named at all; I am sure I should not. This, I assure you, and can prove to you by living evidence, is a true account of the transaction in question, which, if you compare with that you have been induced to give of it in your book, I am persuaded you will see a *difference* that is far from being "*a distinction above your comprehension.*"

Permit me further to remark, that your expression of there being "no *positive proofs* of my having solicited to obtain such a place *for myself*," implies that there are nevertheless some *circumstantial* proofs sufficient at least to support a suspicion. The latter part however of the same sentence, which says, "there is sufficient evidence still existing of my having *applied for it* in favor of another person," must, I apprehend, if credited, destroy that suspicion, and be considered as *positive* proof of the contrary; for, if I had interest enough with Mr. Grenville to obtain that place for another, is it likely that it would have been refused me, had I asked it for myself?

There is another circumstance, which I would offer to your candid consideration. You describe me as "changing sides, and appearing at the bar of the House of Commons to cry down the very measure I had espoused, and direct the storm that was falling upon that minister." As this must have been after my supposed solicitation of the favor for myself or my friend, and Mr. Grenville and Mr. Whately were both in the House at the time, and both asked me questions, can it be conceived, that, offended as they must have been with such a conduct in me, neither of them should put me in mind of this my sudden changing of sides, or remark it to the House, or reproach me with it, or require my reasons for it? And yet all the members then present know, that not a syllable of the kind fell from either of them, or from any of their party.

I persuade myself by this time you begin to suspect you may have been misled by your informers. I do not ask who they are, because I do not wish to have particular motives for disliking people, who in general may deserve my respect. They too may have drawn *consequences* beyond the

information they received from others, and, hearing the office had been *given* to a person of my nomination, might as naturally suppose *I had solicited it*, as Dr. Tucker, hearing that I had *solicited it*, might "*conclude*" it was for myself.

I desire you to believe, that I take kindly, as I ought, your freely mentioning to me "that it has long appeared to you, that I much exceeded the bounds of morality in the methods I pursued for the advancement of the supposed interests of America." I am sensible there is a good deal of truth in the adage, that *our sins and our debts are always more than we take them to be*; and though I cannot at present, on examination of my conscience, charge myself with any immorality of that kind, it becomes me to suspect, that what has *long appeared* to you may have some foundation. You are so good as to add, that, "if it can be proved you have unjustly suspected me, you shall have a satisfaction in acknowledging the error." It is often a thing hard to prove that suspicions are unjust, even when we know what they are; and harder when we are unacquainted with them. I must presume, therefore, that in mentioning them, you had an intention of communicating the grounds of them to me if I should request it, which I now do, and I assure you, with a sincere desire and design of amending what you may show me to have been wrong in my conduct, and to thank you for the admonition. In your writings I *appear* a bad man; but, if I am such, and you can thus help me to become *in reality* a good one, I shall esteem it more than a sufficient reparation to, Reverend Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.\*

---

\* A memorandum was found appended to the rough draft of this letter, in the handwriting of the author, dated February 7, 1775, in which he said, "No answer has yet been received." In a future edition of his work, however, Dean Tucker omitted the offensive passages.—ED.

## CHAPTER IV.

### Franklin's Examination before the House of Commons.

1766.

The examination of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, in the British House of Commons, relative to the repeal of the American Stamp Act, in 1766.\*

FROM the journal of the House of Commons, as given by Mr. Vaughan.

*"February 3d, 1766.* Benjamin Franklin and a number of other persons ordered to attend the committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to consider farther the several papers, which were presented to the House by Mr. Secretary Conway.

*"February 13th.* Benjamin Franklin, hav-

---

\* As soon as the Stamp Act was promulgated in the colonies, a cloud of petitions from their various assemblies was showered upon Parliament for its repeal. The stamped paper was rejected as if it were poisoned; vessels were forbidden to land it; the distributors were compelled to resign their commissions; Hughes dared not show himself in the streets, nor did Franklin entirely escape. A caricature of the period represents the devil whispering in his ear: "Ben, you shall be my agent throughout my dominions." His house and family even were supposed at one time to be in peril from the mob, as appears by the following extract from a letter written him by his wife on the 22d September:

"You will see by the papers what work has happened in other places, and something has been said relative to raising a mob in this place. I was for nine days kept in a continual hurry by people to remove; and Sally was persuaded to go to Burlington (the residence of her brother, the governor) for safety; but on Monday last we had very great rejoicings on account of

ing passed through his examination, was excepted from farther attendance.

*"February 24th.* The resolutions of the committee were reported by the chairman, Mr. Fuller; their seventh and

---

the change of the ministry, and a preparation for bonfires at night, and several houses threatened to be pulled down.

"Cousin Davenport came and told me that more than twenty people had told him it was his duty to be with me. I said I was pleased to receive civility from any body, so he staid with me some time; towards night I said he should fetch a gun or two, as we had none. I sent to ask my brother to come and bring his gun also, so we [turned] one room into a magazine; I ordered some sort of defence up-stairs, such as I could manage myself. I said when I was advised to remove, that I was very sure you had done nothing to hurt anybody, nor had I given any offence to any person at all, nor would I be made uneasy by anybody, nor would I stir or show the least uneasiness, but if any one came to disturb me, I should show a proper resentment, and I should be very much affronted with anybody.

"Sally was gone with Miss Rose to see Captain Real's daughter, and heard the report there, and came home to be with me; but I had sent her word not to come. I was told there were eight hundred men ready to assist any one that should be molested.

\* \* \* "Billy (the Governor of New Jersey) came down to ask us up to Burlington. I consented to Sally's going, but I will not stir, as I really don't think it would be right in me to stir or show the least uneasiness at all. \* \* \*

"It is Mr. Samuel Smith that is setting the people mad by telling them it was you that had planned the Stamp Act, and that you are endeavoring to get the Test Act brought over here."

Such was the state of affairs in America when the subject was again brought before Parliament in the beginning of '66, the Marquis of Rockingham having displaced Mr. Grenville.

The new ministers resolved to recommend a repeal of the Stamp Act. While the question was under debate in Parliament, a motion which probably originated with the ministers, who were now striving to effect a repeal of the act, was adopted, that Franklin be called before the House and examined respecting the state of affairs in America. This is the report of his examination.

There is nothing he ever wrote in which Franklin exhibited more of all the qualities which distinguished him among men than his replies to the questions put to him on this occasion.—ED.

last resolution setting forth, that it was their opinion that the House be moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill to repeal the Stamp Act."

1. *Q.* What is your name, and place of abode?

*A.* Franklin, of Philadelphia.

2. *Q.* Do the Americans pay any considerable taxes among themselves?

*A.* Certainly many, and very heavy taxes.

3. *Q.* What are the present taxes in Pennsylvania, laid by the laws of the colony?

*A.* There are taxes on all estates real and personal; a poll tax; a tax on all offices, professions, trades, and businesses, according to their profits; an excise on all wine, rum, and other spirits; and a duty of ten pounds per head on all negroes imported, with some other duties.

4. *Q.* For what purposes are those taxes laid?

*A.* For the support of the civil and military establishments of the country, and to discharge the heavy debt contracted in the last war.

5. *Q.* How long are those taxes to continue?

*A.* Those for discharging the debt are to continue till 1772, and longer, if the debt should not be then all discharged. The others must always continue.

6. *Q.* Was it not expected that the debt would have been sooner discharged?

*A.* It was, when the peace was made with France and Spain. But, a fresh war breaking out with the Indians, a fresh load of debt was incurred; and the taxes, of course, continued longer by a new law.

7. *Q.* Are not all the people very able to pay those taxes?

*A.* No. The frontier counties, all along the continent, having been frequently ravaged by the enemy and greatly impoverished, are able to pay very little tax. And therefore, in consideration of their distresses, our late tax laws do expressly favor those counties, excusing the sufferers; and I suppose the same is done in other governments.

8. *Q.* Are not you concerned in the management of the post-office in America?

*A.* Yes. I am deputy-postmaster-general of North America.

9. *Q.* Don't you think the distribution of stamps by post to all the inhabitants very practicable, if there was no opposition?

*A.* The posts only go along the seacoasts; they do not, except in a few instances, go back into the country; and, if they did, sending for stamps by post would occasion an expense of postage amounting in many cases to much more than that of the stamps themselves.

10. *Q.* Are you acquainted with Newfoundland?

*A.* I never was there.

11. *Q.* Do you know whether there are any post-roads on that island?

*A.* I have heard that there are no roads at all, but that the communication between one settlement and another is by sea only.

12. *Q.* Can you disperse the stamps by post in Canada?

*A.* There is only a post between Montreal and Quebec. The inhabitants live so scattered and remote from each other in that vast country, that posts cannot be supported among them, and therefore they cannot get stamps per post. The English colonies, too, along the frontiers are very thinly settled.



13. Q. From the thinness of the back settlements, would not the Stamp Act be extremely inconvenient to the inhabitants, if executed?

A. To be sure it would; as many of the inhabitants could not get stamps when they had occasion for them without taking long journeys, and spending perhaps three or four pounds, that the crown might get sixpence.

14. Q. Are not the colonies, from their circumstances, very able to pay the stamp duty?

A. In my opinion there is not gold and silver enough in the colonies to pay the stamp duty for one year.\*

15. Q. Don't you know that the money arising from the stamps was all to be laid out in America?

A. I know it is appropriated by the act to the American service; but it will be spent in the conquered colonies, where the soldiers are; not in the colonies that pay it.

16. Q. Is there not a balance of trade due from the colonies where the troops are posted, that will bring back the money to the old colonies?

A. I think not. I believe very little would come back. I know of no trade likely to bring it back. I think it

---

\* The Stamp Act said, "that the Americans shall have no commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase, nor grant, nor recover debts; they shall neither marry nor make their wills, unless they pay such and such sums" in *specie* for the stamps which must give validity to the proceedings. The operation of such a tax, had it obtained the consent of the people, appeared inevitable; and its annual productiveness, on its introduction, was estimated, by its proposer in the House of Commons at the committee for supplies, at one hundred thousand pounds sterling. The colonies being already reduced to the necessity of having *paper* money, by sending to Britain the *specie* they collected in foreign trade, in order to make up for the deficiency of their other returns for British manufactures, there were doubts whether there could remain *specie* sufficient to answer the tax.—B. V.

would come, from the colonies where it was spent, directly to England ; for I have always observed, that in every colony the more plenty the means of remittance to England, the more goods are sent for, and the more trade with England carried on.

17. *Q.* What number of white inhabitants do you think there are in Pennsylvania ?

*A.* I suppose there may be about one hundred and sixty thousand.

18. *Q.* What number of them are Quakers ?

*A.* Perhaps a third.

19. *Q.* What number of Germans ?

*A.* Perhaps another third ; but I cannot speak with certainty.

20. *Q.* Have any number of the Germans seen service, as soldiers, in Europe ?

*A.* Yes, many of them, both in Europe and America.

21. *Q.* Are they as much dissatisfied with the stamp duty as the English ?

*A.* Yes, and more ; and with reason, as their stamps are, in many cases, to be double.\*

22. *Q.* How many white men do you suppose there are in North America ?

---

\* The Stamp Act provided, that a double duty should be laid " where the instrument, proceedings, &c., shall be engrossed, written, or printed within the said colonies and plantations, in any other than the English language." This measure, it is presumed, appeared to be suggested by motives of convenience, and the policy of assimilating persons of foreign to those of British descent, and preventing their interference in the conduct of law business till this change should be effected. It seems, however, to have been deemed too precipitate, immediately to extend this clause to newly-conquered countries. An exemption therefore was granted, in this particular, with respect to Canada and Grenada, for the space of five years, to be reckoned from the commencement of the duty. See the Stamp Act.—B. V.

*A.* About three hundred thousand, from sixteen to sixty years of age.\*

23. *Q.* What may be the amount of one year's imports into Pennsylvania from Britain?

*A.* I have been informed that our merchants compute the imports from Britain to be above five hundred thousand pounds.

24. *Q.* What may be the amount of the produce of your province exported to Britain?

*A.* It must be small, as we produce little that is wanted in Britain. I suppose it cannot exceed forty thousand pounds.

25. *Q.* How then do you pay the balance?

*A.* The balance is paid by our produce carried to the West Indies, and sold in our own islands, or to the French, Spaniards, Danes, and Dutch; by the same produce carried to other colonies in North America, as to New England, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Carolina, and Georgia; by the same, carried to different parts of Europe, as Spain, Portugal, and Italy. In all which places we receive either money, bills of exchange, or commodities that suit for remittance to Britain; which, together with all the profits on the industry of our merchants and mariners, arising in those circuitous voyages, and the freights made by their ships, centre finally in Britain to discharge the balance, and pay for British manufactures continually used in the provinces, or sold to foreigners by our traders.

---

\* Strangers excluded, some parts of the northern colonies doubled their numbers in fifteen or sixteen years; to the southward they were longer; but, taking one with another, they had doubled, by natural generation only, once in twenty-five years. Pennsylvania, including strangers, had doubled in about sixteen years.—B. V.

26. *Q.* Have you heard of any difficulties lately laid on the Spanish trade?

*A.* Yes; I have heard, that it has been greatly obstructed by some new regulations, and by the English men-of-war and cutters stationed all along the coast in America.

27. *Q.* Do you think it right that America should be protected by this country and pay no part of the expense?

*A.* That is not the case. The colonies raised, clothed, and paid, during the last war, near twenty-five thousand men, and spent many millions.

28. *Q.* Were you not reimbursed by Parliament?

*A.* We were only reimbursed what, in your opinion, we had advanced beyond our proportion, or beyond what might reasonably be expected from us; and it was a very small part of what we spent. Pennsylvania, in particular, disbursed about five hundred thousand pounds, and the reimbursements, in the whole, did not exceed sixty thousand pounds.

29. *Q.* You have said that you pay heavy taxes in Pennsylvania; what do they amount to in the pound?

*A.* The tax on all estates, real and personal, is eighteen pence in the pound, fully rated; and the tax on the profits of trades and professions, with other taxes, do, I suppose, make full half a crown in the pound.

30. *Q.* Do you know any thing of the rate of exchange in Pennsylvania, and whether it has fallen lately?

*A.* It is commonly from one hundred and seventy to one hundred and seventy-five. I have heard, that it has fallen lately from one hundred and seventy-five to one hundred and sixty-two and a half; owing, I suppose, to their lessening their orders for goods; and, when their debts to this country are paid, I think the exchange will probably be at par.

31. Q. Do you not think the people of America would submit to pay the stamp duty, if it was moderated?

A. No, never, unless compelled by force of arms.

32. Q. Are not the taxes in Pennsylvania laid on unequally, in order to burden the English trade; particularly the tax on professions and business?

A. It is not more burdensome in proportion than the tax on lands. It is intended and supposed to take an equal proportion of profits.

33. Q. How is the assembly composed? Of what kinds of people are the members; landholders or traders?

A. It is composed of landholders, merchants, and artificers.

34. Q. Are not the majority landholders?

A. I believe they are.

35. Q. Do not they, as much as possible, shift the tax off from the land, to ease that, and lay the burden heavier on trade?

A. I have never understood it so. I never heard such a thing suggested. And indeed an attempt of that kind could answer no purpose. The merchant or trader is always skilled in figures, and ready with his pen and ink. If unequal burdens are laid on his trade, he puts an additional price on his goods; and the consumers, who are chiefly landholders, finally pay the greatest part, if not the whole.

36. Q. What was the temper of America towards Great Britain before the year 1763?\*

---

\* In the year 1733, "for the welfare and prosperity of our sugar colonies in America," and "for remedying discouragements of planters," duties were "*given and granted*" to George the Second, upon all rum, spirits, molasses, syrups, sugar, and paneles of foreign growth, produce, and manufacture, imported into the colonies. This *regulation of trade* for the benefit of the

A. The best in the world. They submitted willingly to the government of the crown, and paid, in their courts, obedience to the acts of Parliament. Numerous as the people are in the several old provinces, they cost you nothing in forts, citadels, garrisons, or armies, to keep them in subjection. They were governed by this country at the expense only of a little pen, ink, and paper; they were led by a thread. They had not only a respect, but an affection for Great Britain; for its laws, its customs and manners, and even a fondness for its fashions, that greatly increased the commerce. Natives of Britain were always treated with particular regard; to be an *Old-England man* was, of itself, a character of some respect, and gave a kind of rank among us.

37. Q. And what is their temper now?

---

general empire was acquiesced in, notwithstanding the introduction of the novel terms "give and grant." But the act, which was made only for the term of five years, and had been several times renewed in the reign of George the Second, and once in the reign of George the Third, was renewed again in the year 1763, in the reign of George the Third, and *extended to other articles upon new and altered grounds*. It was stated in the preamble to this act, "that it was expedient that new provisions and regulations should be established for *improving the revenue of this kingdom*;" that it "was just and necessary that a revenue should be raised in America for defending, protecting, and securing the same;" "and that the Commons of Great Britain, desirous of making some provision towards *raising the said revenue* in America, have resolved to *give and grant* to his Majesty the several rates and duties," &c. Mr. Mauduit, agent for Massachusetts Bay, tells us, that he was instructed in the following terms to oppose Mr. Grenville's taxing system. "You are to remonstrate against these measures, and, if possible, to obtain a repeal of the Sugar Act, and prevent the imposition of any further duties or taxes on the colonies. Measures will be taken that you may be joined by all the other agents. *Boston, June 14th, 1764.*"

The question proposed to Dr. Franklin alludes to this sugar act in 1763. Dr. Franklin's answer particularly merits the attention of the historian and the politician.—B. V.

*A.* O, very much altered.

38. *Q.* Did you ever hear the authority of Parliament to make laws for America questioned till lately?

*A.* The authority of Parliament was allowed to be valid in all laws, except such as should lay internal taxes. It was never disputed in laying duties to regulate commerce.

39. *Q.* In what proportion hath population increased in America?

*A.* I think the inhabitants of all the provinces together, taken at a medium, double in about twenty-five years. But their demand for British manufactures increases much faster; as the consumption is not merely in proportion to their numbers, but grows with the growing abilities of the same numbers to pay for them. In 1723, the whole importation from Britain to Pennsylvania was about fifteen thousand pounds sterling; it is now near half a million.

40. *Q.* In what light did the people of America use to consider the Parliament of Great Britain?

*A.* They considered the Parliament as the great bulwark and security of their liberties and privileges, and always spoke of it with the utmost respect and veneration. Arbitrary ministers, they thought, might possibly, at times, attempt to oppress them; but they relied on it, that the Parliament, on application, would always give redress. They remembered, with gratitude, a strong instance of this, when a bill was brought into Parliament, with a clause to make royal instructions laws in the colonies, which the House of Commons would not pass, and it was thrown out.

41. *Q.* And have they not still the same respect for Parliament?

*A.* No, it is greatly lessened.

42. *Q.* To what cause is that owing?

*A.* To a concurrence of causes ; the restraints lately laid on their trade, by which the bringing of foreign gold and silver into the colonies was prevented ; the prohibition of making paper money among themselves, and then demanding a new and heavy tax by stamps, taking away, at the same time, trials by juries, and refusing to receive and hear their humble petitions.

43. *Q.* Don't you think they would submit to the Stamp Act, if it was modified, the obnoxious parts taken out, and the duty reduced to some particulars of small moment ?

*A.* No, they will never submit to it.

44. *Q.* What do you think is the reason that the people in America increase faster than in England ?

*A.* Because they marry younger, and more generally.

45. *Q.* Why so ?

*A.* Because any young couple, that are industrious, may easily obtain land of their own, on which they can raise a family.

46. *Q.* Are not the lower ranks of people more at their ease in America than in England ?

*A.* They may be so, if they are sober and diligent, as they are better paid for their labor.

47. *Q.* What is your opinion of a future tax, imposed on the same principle with that of the Stamp Act ? How would the Americans receive it ?

*A.* Just as they do this. They would not pay it.

48. *Q.* Have not you heard of the resolutions of this House, and of the House of Lords, asserting the right of Parliament relating to America, including a power to tax the people there ?

*A.* Yes, I have heard of such resolutions.



49. *Q.* What will be the opinion of the Americans on those resolutions?

*A.* They will think them unconstitutional and unjust.

50. *Q.* Was it an opinion in America before 1763, that the Parliament had no right to lay taxes and duties there?

*A.* I never heard any objection to the right of laying duties to regulate commerce; but a right to lay internal taxes was never supposed to be in Parliament, as we are not represented there.

51. *Q.* On what do you found your opinion, that the people in America made any such distinction?

*A.* I know that whenever the subject has occurred in conversation where I have been present, it has appeared to be the opinion of every one, that we could not be taxed by a Parliament wherein we were not represented. But the payment of duties laid by an act of Parliament, as regulations of commerce, was never disputed.

52. *Q.* But can you name any act of assembly, or public act of any of your governments, that made such distinction?

*A.* I do not know that there was any; I think there was never an occasion to make any such act, till now that you have attempted to tax us; that has occasioned resolutions of assembly, declaring the distinction, in which I think every assembly on the continent, and every member in every assembly, have been unanimous.

53. *Q.* What, then, could occasion conversations on that subject before that time?

*A.* There was in 1754 a proposition made, (I think it came from hence,) that in case of a war, which was then apprehended, the governors of the colonies should meet, and order the levying of troops, building of forts, and taking every other necessary measure for the general defence;

and should draw on the treasury here for the sums expended, which were afterwards to be raised in the colonies by a general tax, to be laid on them by *act of Parliament*. This occasioned a good deal of conversation on the subject; and the general opinion was, that the Parliament neither would nor could lay any tax on us, till we were duly represented in Parliament; because it was not just, nor agreeable to the nature of an English constitution.

54. Q. Don't you know there was a time in New York, when it was under consideration to make an application to Parliament to lay taxes on that colony, upon a deficiency arising from the assembly's refusing or neglecting to raise the necessary supplies for the support of the civil government?

A. I never heard of it.

55. Q. There was such an application under consideration in New York; and do you apprehend they could suppose the right of Parliament to lay a tax in America was only local, and confined to the case of a deficiency in a particular colony, by a refusal of its assembly to raise the necessary supplies?

A. They could not suppose such a case, as that the assembly would not raise the necessary supplies to support its own government. An assembly that would refuse it must want common sense; which cannot be supposed. I think there was never any such case at New York, and that it must be a misrepresentation, or the fact must be misunderstood. I know there have been some attempts, by ministerial instructions from hence, to oblige the assemblies to settle permanent salaries on governors, which they wisely refused to do; but I believe no assembly of New York, or any other colony, ever refused duly to support government by proper allowances, from time to time, to public officers.

56. *Q.* But, in case a governor, acting by instruction, should call on an assembly to raise the necessary supplies, and the assembly should refuse to do it, do you not think it would then be for the good of the people of the colony, as well as necessary to government, that the Parliament should tax them?

*A.* I do not think it would be necessary. If an assembly could possibly be so absurd, as to refuse raising the supplies requisite for the maintenance of government among them, they could not long remain in such a situation; the disorders and confusion occasioned by it must soon bring them to reason.

57. *Q.* If it should not, ought not the right to be in Great Britain of applying a remedy?

*A.* A right, only to be used in such a case, I should have no objection to; supposing it to be used merely for the good of the people of the colony.

58. *Q.* But who is to judge of that, Britain or the colony?

*A.* Those that feel can best judge.

59. *Q.* You say the colonies have always submitted to external taxes, and object to the right of Parliament only in laying internal taxes; now can you show, that there is any kind of difference between the two taxes to the colony on which they may be laid?

*A.* I think the difference is very great. An *external* tax is a duty laid on commodities imported; that duty is added to the first cost and other charges on the commodity, and, when it is offered to sale, makes a part of the price. If the people do not like it at that price, they refuse it; they are not obliged to pay it. But an *internal* tax is forced from the people without their consent, if not laid by their own representatives. The Stamp Act says, we shall have no

commerce, make no exchange of property with each other, neither purchase, nor grant, nor recover debts; we shall neither marry nor make our wills, unless we pay such and such sums; and thus it is intended to extort our money from us, or ruin us by the consequences of refusing to pay it.

60. *Q.* But supposing the external tax or duty to be laid on the necessities of life, imported into your colony, will not that be the same thing in its effects as an internal tax?

*A.* I do not know a single article imported into the northern colonies, but what they can either do without, or make themselves.

61. *Q.* Don't you think cloth from England absolutely necessary to them?

*A.* No, by no means absolutely necessary; with industry and good management, they may very well supply themselves with all they want.

62. *Q.* Will it not take a long time to establish that manufacture among them; and must they not in the mean while suffer greatly?

*A.* I think not. They have made a surprising progress already. And I am of opinion, that before their old clothes are worn out, they will have new ones of their own making.

63. *Q.* Can they possibly find wool enough in North America?

*A.* They have taken steps to increase the wool. They entered into general combinations to eat no more lamb; and very few lambs were killed last year. This course, persisted in, will soon make a prodigious difference in the quantity of wool. And the establishing of great manufactories, like those in the clothing towns here, is not necessary, as it is where the business is to be carried on for the

purposes of trade. The people will all spin, and work for themselves, in their own houses.

64. *Q.* Can there be wool and manufacture enough in one or two years?

*A.* In three years, I think there may.

65. *Q.* Does not the severity of the winter, in the northern colonies, occasion the wool to be of bad quality?

*A.* No; the wool is very fine and good.

66. *Q.* In the more southern colonies, as in Virginia, don't you know, that the wool is coarse, and only a kind of hair?

*A.* I don't know it. I never heard it. Yet I have been sometimes in Virginia. I cannot say I ever took particular notice of the wool there, but I believe it is good, though I cannot speak positively of it; but Virginia and the colonies south of it have less occasion for wool; their winters are short, and not very severe; and they can very well clothe themselves with linen and cotton of their own raising for the rest of the year.

67. *Q.* Are not the people in the more northern colonies obliged to fodder their sheep all the winter?

*A.* In some of the most northern colonies they may be obliged to do it, some part of the winter.

68. *Q.* Considering the resolutions of Parliament,\* *as to the right*, do you think, if the Stamp Act is repealed, that the North Americans will be satisfied?

*A.* I believe they will.

69. *Q.* Why do you think so?

*A.* I think the resolutions of *right* will give them very little concern, if they are never attempted to be carried into

---

\* Afterwards expressed in the Declaratory Act.—B. V.

practice. The colonies will probably consider themselves in the same situation, in that respect, with Ireland; they know you claim the same right with regard to Ireland, but you never exercise it, and they may believe you never will exercise it in the colonies, any more than in Ireland, unless on some very extraordinary occasion.

70. *Q.* But who are to be the judges of that extraordinary occasion? Is not the Parliament?

*A.* Though the Parliament may judge of the occasion, the people will think it can never exercise such right, till representatives from the colonies are admitted into Parliament; and that, whenever the occasion arises, representatives *will* be ordered.

71. *Q.* Did you never hear that Maryland, during the last war, had refused to furnish a quota towards the common defence?

*A.* Maryland has been much misrepresented in that matter. Maryland, to my knowledge, never refused to contribute or grant aids to the crown. The assemblies, every year during the war, voted considerable sums, and formed bills to raise them. The bills were, according to the constitution of that province, sent up to the Council, or Upper House, for concurrence, that they might be presented to the governor, in order to be enacted into laws. Unhappy disputes between the two Houses, arising from the defects of that constitution principally, rendered all the bills but one or two, abortive. The proprietary's council rejected them. It is true, Maryland did not then contribute its proportion; but it was, in my opinion, the fault of the government, not of the people.

72. *Q.* Was it not talked of in the other provinces, as a proper measure, to apply to Parliament to compel them?

*A.* I have heard such discourse ; but, as it was well known that the people were not to blame, no such application was ever made, nor any step taken towards it.

73. *Q.* Was it not proposed at a public meeting?

*A.* Not that I know of.

74. *Q.* Do you remember the abolishing of the paper currency in New England, by act of assembly?

*A.* I do remember its being abolished in the Massachusetts Bay.

75. *Q.* Was not Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson principally concerned in that transaction?

*A.* I have heard so.

76. *Q.* Was it not at that time a very unpopular law?

*A.* I believe it might, though I can say little about it, as I lived at a distance from that province.

77. *Q.* Was not the scarcity of gold and silver an argument used against abolishing the paper?

*A.* I suppose it was.\*

78. *Q.* What is the present opinion there of that law? Is it as unpopular as it was at first?

*A.* I think it is not.

79. *Q.* Have not instructions from hence been sometimes sent over to governors, highly oppressive and unpolitical?

*A.* Yes.

80. *Q.* Have not some governors dispensed with them for that reason?

*A.* Yes, I have heard so.

81. *Q.* Did the Americans ever dispute the controlling power of Parliament to regulate the commerce?

---

\* See Remarks and Facts relative to the American Paper Money. in Sparks's Works of Franklin, vol. ii., p. 340.

*A.* No.

82. *Q.* Can any thing less than a military force carry the Stamp Act into execution?

*A.* I do not see how a military force can be applied to that purpose.

83. *Q.* Why may it not?

*A.* Suppose a military force sent into America, they will find nobody in arms; what are they then to do? They cannot force a man to take stamps who chooses to do without them. They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one.

84. *Q.* If the act is not repealed, what do you think will be the consequences?

*A.* A total loss of the respect and affection the people of America bear to this country, and of all the commerce that depends on that respect and affection.

85. *Q.* How can the commerce be affected?

*A.* You will find, that if the act is not repealed, they will take a very little of your manufactures in a short time.

86. *Q.* Is it in their power to do without them?

*A.* I think they may very well do without them.

87. *Q.* Is it their interest not to take them?

*A.* The goods they take from Britain are either necessities, mere conveniences, or superfluities. The first, as cloth, &c., with a little industry they can make at home; the second they can do without, till they are able to provide them among themselves; and the last, which are much the greatest part, they will strike off immediately. They are mere articles of fashion, purchased and consumed because the fashion in a respected country; but will now be detested and rejected. The people have already struck off, by general agreement, the use of all goods fashionable in



mournings, and many thousand pounds' worth are sent back as unsalable.

88. *Q.* Is it their interest to make cloth at home?

*A.* I think they may at present get it cheaper from Britain; I mean, of the same fineness and workmanship; but, when one considers other circumstances, the restraints on their trade, and the difficulty of making remittances, it is their interest to make every thing.

89. *Q.* Suppose an act of internal regulations connected with a tax; how would they receive it?

*A.* I think it would be objected to.

90. *Q.* Then no regulation with a tax would be submitted to?

*A.* Their opinion is, that, when aids to the crown are wanted, they are to be asked of the several assemblies, according to the old established usage; who will, as they always have done, grant them freely. And that their money ought not to be given away, without their consent, by persons at a distance, unacquainted with their circumstances and abilities. The granting aids to the crown is the only means they have of recommending themselves to their sovereign; and they think it extremely hard and unjust, that a body of men, in which they have no representatives, should make a merit to itself of giving and granting what is not its own, but theirs; and deprive them of a right they esteem of the utmost value and importance, as it is the security of all their other rights.

91. *Q.* But is not the post-office, which they have long received, a tax as well as a regulation?

*A.* No; the money paid for the postage of a letter is not of the nature of a tax; it is merely a *quantum meruit* for a service done; no person is compellable to pay the money

if he does not choose to receive the service. A man may still, as before the act, send his letter by a servant, a special messenger, or a friend, if he thinks it cheaper and safer.

92. *Q.* But do they not consider the regulations of the post-office, by the act of last year, as a tax?

*A.* By the regulations of last year the rate of postage was generally abated near thirty per cent through all America; they certainly cannot consider such abatement *as a tax*.

93. *Q.* If an excise was laid by Parliament, which they might likewise avoid paying, by not consuming the articles excised, would they then not object to it?

*A.* They would certainly object to it, as an excise is unconnected with any service done, and is merely an aid, which they think ought to be asked of them, and granted by them, if they are to pay it; and can be granted for them by no others whatsoever, whom they have not empowered for that purpose.

94. *Q.* You say they do not object to the right of Parliament, in laying duties on goods to be paid on their importation; now, is there any kind of difference between a duty on the importation of goods, and an excise on their consumption?

*A.* Yes, a very material one; an excise, for the reasons I have just mentioned, they think you can have no right to lay within their country. But the sea is yours; you maintain, by your fleets, the safety of navigation in it, and keep it clear of pirates; you may have, therefore, a natural and equitable right to some toll or duty on merchandises carried through that part of your dominions, towards defraying the expense you are at in ships to maintain the safety of that carriage.

95. *Q.* Does this reasoning hold in the case of a duty laid on the produce of their lands exported? And would they not then object to such a duty?

*A.* If it tended to make the produce so much dearer abroad, as to lessen the demand for it, to be sure they would object to such a duty; not to your right of laying it, but they would complain of it as a burden, and petition you to lighten it.

96. *Q.* Is not the duty paid on the tobacco exported, a duty of that kind?

*A.* That, I think, is only on tobacco carried coastwise, from one colony to another, and appropriated as a fund for supporting the college at Williamsburg in Virginia.

97. *Q.* Have not the assemblies in the West Indies the same natural rights with those in North America?

*A.* Undoubtedly.

98. *Q.* And is there not a tax laid there on their sugars exported?

*A.* I am not much acquainted with the West Indies; but the duty of four and a half per cent on sugars exported was, I believe, granted by their own assemblies.

99. *Q.* How much is the poll-tax in your province laid on unmarried men?

*A.* It is, I think, fifteen shillings, to be paid by every single freeman, upwards of twenty-one years old.

100. *Q.* What is the annual amount of all the taxes in Pennsylvania?

*A.* I suppose about twenty thousand pounds sterling.

101. *Q.* Supposing the Stamp Act continued and enforced, do you imagine that ill humor will induce the Americans to give as much for worse manufactures of their own, and use them, preferable to better of ours?

*A.* Yes, I think so. People will pay as freely to gratify one passion as another, their resentment as their pride.

102. *Q.* Would the people at Boston discontinue their trade?

*A.* The merchants are a very small number compared with the body of the people, and must discontinue their trade, if nobody will buy their goods.

103. *Q.* What are the body of the people in the colonies?

*A.* They are farmers, husbandmen, or planters.

104. *Q.* Would they suffer the produce of their lands to rot?

*A.* No; but they would not raise so much. They would manufacture more, and plough less.

105. *Q.* Would they live without the administration of justice in civil matters, and suffer all the inconveniences of such a situation for any considerable time, rather than take the stamps, supposing the stamps were protected by a sufficient force, where every one might have them?

*A.* I think the supposition impracticable, that the stamps should be so protected as that every one might have them. The act requires sub-distributors to be appointed in every county town, district, and village, and they would be necessary. But the principal distributors, who were to have had a considerable profit on the whole, have not thought it worth while to continue in the office; and I think it impossible to find sub-distributors fit to be trusted, who, for the trifling profit that must come to their share, would incur the odium, and run the hazard, that would attend it; and, if they could be found, I think it impracticable to protect the stamps in so many distant and remote places.

106. *Q.* But in places where they could be protected, would not the people use them, rather than remain in such

a situation, unable to obtain any right, or recover by law any debt?

*A.* It is hard to say what they would do. I can only judge what other people will think, and how they will act, by what I feel within myself. I have a great many debts due to me in America, and I had rather they should remain unrecoverable by any law, than submit to the Stamp Act. They will be debts of honor. It is my opinion the people will either continue in that situation, or find some way to extricate themselves; perhaps by generally agreeing to proceed in the courts without stamps.

107. *Q.* What do you think a sufficient military force to protect the distribution of the stamps in every part of America?

*A.* A very great force, I can't say what, if the disposition of America is for a general resistance.

108. *Q.* What is the number of men in America able to bear arms, or of disciplined militia?

*A.* There are, I suppose, at least . . . . .

[*Question objected to. He withdrew. Called in again.*]

109. *Q.* Is the American Stamp Act an equal tax on the country?

*A.* I think not.

110. *Q.* Why so?

*A.* The greatest part of the money must arise from lawsuits for the recovery of debts, and be paid by the lower sort of people, who were too poor easily to pay their debts. It is, therefore, a heavy tax on the poor, and a tax upon them for being poor.

111. *Q.* But will not this increase of expense be a means of lessening the number of lawsuits?

*A.* I think not; for as the costs all fall upon the debtor,

and are to be paid by him, they would be no discouragement to the creditor to bring his action.

112. *Q.* Would it not have the effect of excessive usury?

*A.* Yes; as an oppression of the debtor.

113. *Q.* How many ships are there laden annually in North America with flax-seed for Ireland?

*A.* I cannot speak to the number of ships; but I know, that, in 1752, ten thousand hogsheads of flax-seed, each containing seven bushels, were exported from Philadelphia to Ireland. I suppose the quality is greatly increased since that time, and it is understood, that the exportation from New York is equal to that from Philadelphia.

114. *Q.* What becomes of the flax that grows with that flax-seed?

*A.* They manufacture some into coarse, and some into a middling kind of linen.

115. *Q.* Are there any slitting-mills in America?

*A.* I think there are three, but I believe only one at present employed. I suppose they will all be set to work, if the interruption of the trade continues.

116. *Q.* Are there any fulling-mills there?

*A.* A great many.

117. *Q.* Did you never hear, that a great quantity of stockings were contracted for, for the army, during the war, and manufactured in Philadelphia?

*A.* I have heard so.

118. *Q.* If the Stamp Act should be repealed, would not the Americans think they could oblige the Parliament to repeal every external tax law now in force?

*A.* It is hard to answer questions of what people at such a distance will think.

119. *Q.* But what do you imagine they will think were the motives of repealing the act?

*A.* I suppose they will think, that it was repealed from a conviction of its inexpediency; and they will rely upon it, that, while the same inexpediency subsists, you will never attempt to make such another.

120. *Q.* What do you mean by its inexpediency?

*A.* I mean its inexpediency on several accounts; the poverty and inability of those who were to pay the tax, the general discontent it has occasioned, and the impracticability of enforcing it.

121. *Q.* If the act should be repealed, and the legislature should show its resentment to the opposers of the Stamp Act, would the colonies acquiesce in the authority of the legislature? What is your opinion they would do?

*A.* I don't doubt at all, that if the legislature repeal the Stamp Act, the colonies will acquiesce in the authority.

122. *Q.* But if the legislature should think fit to ascertain its right to lay taxes, by any act laying a small tax, contrary to their opinion, would they submit to pay the tax?

*A.* The proceedings of the people in America have been considered too much together. The proceedings of the assemblies have been very different from those of the mobs, and should be distinguished, as having no connexion with each other. The assemblies have only peaceably resolved what they take to be their rights; they have taken no measures for opposition by force, they have not built a fort, raised a man, or provided a grain of ammunition, in order to such opposition. The ringleaders of riots, they think ought to be punished; they would punish them themselves, if they could. Every sober, sensible man, would wish to see rioters punished, as, otherwise, peaceable people have no security

of person or estate; but as to an internal tax, how small soever, laid by the legislature here on the people there, while they have no representatives in this legislature, I think it will never be submitted to; they will oppose it to the last; they do not consider it as at all necessary for you to raise money on them by your taxes; because they are, and always have been, ready to raise money by taxes among themselves, and to grant large sums, equal to their abilities, upon requisition from the crown.

They have not only granted equal to their abilities, but, during all the last war, they granted far beyond their abilities, and beyond their proportion with this country (you yourselves being judges), to the amount of many hundred thousand pounds; and this they did freely and readily, only on a sort of promise, from the Secretary of State, that it should be recommended to Parliament to make them compensation. It was accordingly recommended to Parliament, in the most honorable manner for them. America has been greatly misrepresented and abused here, in papers, and pamphlets, and speeches, as ungrateful, and unreasonable, and unjust; in having put this nation to an immense expense for their defence, and refusing to bear any part of that expense. The colonies raised, paid, and clothed near twenty-five thousand men during the last war; a number equal to those sent from Britain, and far beyond their proportion; they went deeply into debt in doing this, and all their taxes and estates are mortgaged for many years to come, for discharging that debt.

Government here was at that time very sensible of this. The colonies were recommended to Parliament. Every year the King sent down to the House a written message to this purpose; "that his Majesty, being highly sensible of



the zeal and vigor with which his faithful subjects in North America had exerted themselves, in defence of his Majesty's just rights and possessions, recommended it to the House to take the same into consideration, and enable him to give them a proper compensation." You will find those messages on your own journals every year of the war to the very last ; and you did accordingly give two hundred thousand pounds annually to the crown, to be distributed in such compensation to the colonies.

This is the strongest of all proofs, that the colonies, far from being unwilling to bear a share of the burden, did exceed their proportion ; for if they had done less, or had only equalled their proportion, there would have been no room or reason for compensation. Indeed, the sums, reimbursed them, were by no means adequate to the expense they incurred beyond their proportion ; but they never murmured at that ; they esteemed their sovereign's approbation of their zeal and fidelity, and the approbation of this House, far beyond any other kind of compensation ; therefore there was no occasion for this act, to force money from a willing people. They had not refused giving money for the purposes of the act ; no requisition had been made ; they were always willing and ready to do what could reasonably be expected from them, and in this light they wish to be considered.

123. *Q.* But suppose Great Britain should be engaged in a war in Europe, would North America contribute to the support of it ?

*A.* I do think they would as far as their circumstances would permit. They consider themselves as a part of the British empire, and as having one common interest with it ; they may be looked on here as foreigners, but they do not

consider themselves as such. They are zealous for the honor and prosperity of this nation; and, while they are well used, will always be ready to support it, as far as their little power goes. In 1739 they were called upon to assist in the expedition against Carthagena, and they sent three thousand men to join your army. It is true, Carthagena is in America, but as remote from the northern colonies, as if it had been in Europe. They make no distinction of wars, as to their duty of assisting in them.

I know the last war is commonly spoken of here, as entered into for the defence, or for the sake, of the people in America. I think it is quite misunderstood. It began about the limits between Canada and Nova Scotia; about territories to which the *crown* indeed laid claim, but which were not claimed by any British *colony*; none of the lands had been granted to any colonist; we had therefore no particular concern or interest in that dispute. As to the Ohio, the contest there began about your right of trading in the Indian country, a right you had by the treaty of Utrecht, which the French infringed; they seized the traders and their goods, which were your manufactures; they took a fort which a company of your merchants, and their factors, and correspondents, had erected there to secure that trade. Braddock was sent with an army to retake that fort, (which was looked on here as another encroachment on the King's territory,) and to protect your trade. It was not till after his defeat that the colonies were attacked.\* They were before in perfect peace with both

---

\* When this army was in the utmost distress, from the want of wagons, &c., our author and his son voluntarily traversed the country, in order to collect a sufficient quantity; and they had zeal and address enough to effect

French and Indians; the troops were not, therefore, sent for their defence.

The trade with the Indians, though carried on in America, is not an American interest. The people of America are chiefly farmers and planters; scarce any thing that they raise or produce is an article of commerce with the Indians. The Indian trade is a British interest; it is carried on with British manufactures, for the profit of British merchants and manufacturers; therefore the war, as it commenced for the defence of territories of the crown (the property of no American), and for the defence of a trade purely British, was really a British war, and yet the people of America made no scruple of contributing their utmost towards carrying it on, and bringing it to a happy conclusion.

124. *Q.* Do you think, then, that the taking possession of the King's territorial rights, and strengthening the frontiers, is not an American interest?

*A.* Not particularly, but conjointly a British and an American interest.

125. *Q.* You will not deny, that the preceding war, the war with Spain, was entered into for the sake of America; was it not occasioned by captures made in the American seas?

*A.* Yes; captures of ships carrying on the British trade there with British manufactures.

126. *Q.* Was not the late war with the Indians, since the peace with France, a war for America only?

*A.* Yes; it was more particularly for America than the former; but was rather a consequence or remains of the

---

their purpose, upon pledging themselves, to the amount of many thousand pounds, for payment. It was just before Dr. Franklin's last return from England to America, that the accounts in this transaction were passed at the British treasury.—B. V.

former war, the Indians not having been thoroughly pacified; and the Americans bore by much the greatest share of the expense. It was put an end to by the army under General Bouquet; there were not above three hundred regulars in that army, and above one thousand Pennsylvanians.

127. *Q.* Is it not necessary to send troops to America, to defend the Americans against the Indians?

*A.* No, by no means; it never was necessary. They defended themselves when they were but a handful, and the Indians much more numerous. They continually gained ground, and have driven the Indians over the mountains, without any troops sent to their assistance from this country. And can it be thought necessary now to send troops for their defence from those diminished Indian tribes, when the colonies have become so populous and so strong? There is not the least occasion for it; they are very able to defend themselves.

128. *Q.* Do you say there were not more than three hundred regular troops employed in the late Indian war?

*A.* Not on the Ohio, or the frontiers of Pennsylvania, which was the chief part of the war that affected the colonies. There were garrisons at Niagara, Fort Detroit, and those remote posts kept for the sake of your trade; I did not reckon them; but I believe, that on the whole the number of Americans or provincial troops, employed in the war, was greater than that of the regulars. I am not certain, but I think so.

129. *Q.* Do you think the assemblies have a right to levy money on the subject there, to grant to the crown?

*A.* I certainly think so; they have always done it.

130. *Q.* Are they acquainted with the Declaration of

Rights? And do they know, that, by that statute, money is not to be raised on the subject but by consent of Parliament?

*A.* They are very well acquainted with it.

131. *Q.* How then can they think they have a right to levy money for the crown, or for any other than local purposes?

*A.* They understand that clause to relate to subjects only within the realm; that no money can be levied on them for the crown, but by consent of Parliament. The colonies are not supposed to be within the realm; they have assemblies of their own, which are their parliaments, and they are, in that respect, in the same situation with Ireland. When money is to be raised for the crown upon the subject in Ireland, or in the colonies, the consent is given in the Parliament of Ireland, or in the assemblies of the colonies. They think the Parliament of Great Britain cannot properly give that consent, till it has representatives from America; for the Petition of Right expressly says, it is to be by common consent in Parliament; and the people of America have no representatives in Parliament, to make a part of that common consent.

132. *Q.* If the Stamp Act should be repealed, and an act should pass, ordering the assemblies of the colonies to indemnify the sufferers by the riots, would they obey it?

*A.* That is a question I cannot answer.

133. *Q.* Suppose the King should require the colonies to grant a revenue, and the Parliament should be against their doing it, do they think they can grant a revenue to the King, without the consent of the Parliament of Great Britain?

*A.* That is a deep question. As to my own opinion, I

should think myself at liberty to do it, and should do it, if I liked the occasion.

134. *Q.* When money has been raised in the colonies, upon requisitions, has it not been granted to the King?

*A.* Yes, always; but the requisitions have generally been for some service expressed, as to raise, clothe, and pay troops, and not for money only.

135. *Q.* If the act should pass requiring the American assemblies to make compensation to the sufferers, and they should disobey it, and then the Parliament should, by another act, lay an internal tax, would they then obey it?

*A.* The people will pay no internal tax; and, I think, an act to oblige the assemblies to make compensation is unnecessary; for I am of opinion, that, as soon as the present heats are abated, they will take the matter into consideration, and if it is right to be done, they will do it of themselves.

136. *Q.* Do not letters often come into the post-offices in America, directed to some inland town where no post goes?

*A.* Yes.

137. *Q.* Can any private person take up those letters and carry them as directed?

*A.* Yes; any friend of the person may do it, paying the postage that has accrued.

138. *Q.* But must not he pay an additional postage for the distance to such inland town?

*A.* No.

139. *Q.* Can the postmaster answer delivering the letter, without being paid such additional postage?

*A.* Certainly he can demand nothing, where he does no service.

140. *Q.* Suppose a person, being far from home, finds a letter in a post-office directed to him, and he lives in a place to which the post generally goes, and the letter is directed to that place; will the postmaster deliver him the letter, without his paying the postage receivable at the place to which the letter is directed?

*A.* Yes; the office cannot demand postage for a letter that it does not carry, or farther than it does carry it.

141. *Q.* Are not ferry-men in America obliged, by act of Parliament, to carry over the posts without pay?

*A.* Yes.

142. *Q.* Is not this a tax on the ferry-men?

*A.* They do not consider it as such, as they have an advantage from persons travelling with the post.

143. *Q.* If the Stamp Act should be repealed, and the crown should make a requisition to the colonies for a sum of money, would they grant it?

*A.* I believe they would.

144. *Q.* Why do you think so?

*A.* I can speak for the colony I live in; I had it in *instruction* from the assembly to assure the ministry, that, as they always had done, so they should always think it their duty, to grant such aids to the crown as were suitable to their circumstances and abilities, whenever called upon for that purpose, in the usual constitutional manner; and I had the honor of communicating this instruction to that honorable gentleman then minister.\*

---

\* I take the following to be the history of this transaction. Until 1763, and the years following, whenever Great Britain wanted supplies directly from the colonies, the Secretary of State, in his Majesty's name, sent them a letter of requisition, in which the occasion for supplies was expressed; and the colonies returned a *free gift*, the mode of levying which *they* wholly

145. *Q.* Would they do this for a British concern, as suppose a war in some part of Europe, that did not affect them?

*A.* Yes, for any thing that concerned the general interest. They consider themselves a part of the whole.

146. *Q.* What is the usual constitutional manner of calling on the colonies for aids?

*A.* A letter from the Secretary of State.

147. *Q.* Is this all you mean; a letter from the Secretary of State?

*A.* I mean the usual way of requisition, in a circular letter from the Secretary of State, by his Majesty's command, reciting the occasion, and recommending it to the colonies to grant such aids as became their loyalty, and were suitable to their abilities.

148. *Q.* Did the Secretary of State ever write for money for the crown?

*A.* The requisitions have been to raise, clothe, and pay men, which cannot be done without money.

---

prescribed. At this period, a chancellor of the exchequer (Mr. George Grenville) steps forth, and says to the House of Commons; "*We must call for money from the colonies in the way of a tax;*" and to the colony agents, "*Write to your several colonies, and tell them, if they dislike a duty upon stamps, and prefer any other method of raising the money themselves, I shall be content, provided the amount be but raised.*" "That is," observed the colonies, when commenting upon his terms, "if we will not tax ourselves, as we may be directed, the Parliament will tax us." Dr. Franklin's instructions, spoken of above, related to this gracious option. As the colonies could not choose "*another tax,*" while they disclaimed *every* tax, the Parliament passed the Stamp Act.

It seems, that the only part of the offer, which bore a show of favor, was the grant of the *mode of levying*; and this was the only circumstance which was *not new*.

See Mr. Mauduit's account of Mr. Grenville's conference with the agents, confirmed by the agents for Georgia and Virginia; and Mr. Burke's Speech, in 1774, p. 55.—B. V.



149. *Q.* Would they grant money alone, if called on?

*A.* In my opinion they would, money as well as men, when they have money, or can make it.

150. *Q.* If the Parliament should repeal the Stamp Act, will the assembly of Pennsylvania rescind their resolutions?

*A.* I think not.

151. *Q.* Before there was any thought of the Stamp Act, did they wish for a representation in Parliament?

*A.* No.

152. *Q.* Don't you know, that there is, in the Pennsylvania charter, an express reservation of the right of Parliament to lay taxes there?

*A.* I know there is a clause in the charter, by which the King grants, that he will levy no taxes on the inhabitants, unless it be with the consent of the assembly, or by act of Parliament.

153. *Q.* How, then, could the assembly of Pennsylvania assert, that laying a tax on them by the Stamp Act was an infringement of their rights?

*A.* They understand it thus; by the same charter, and otherwise, they are entitled to all the privileges and liberties of Englishmen; they find in the Great Charters, and the Petition and Declaration of Rights, that one of the privileges of English subjects is, that they are not to be taxed but by their common consent; they have therefore relied upon it, from the first settlement of the province, that the Parliament never would, nor could, by color of that clause in the charter, assume a right of taxing them, till it had qualified itself to exercise such right, by admitting representatives from the people to be taxed, who ought to make a part of that common consent.

154. Q. Are there any words in the charter that justify that construction?

A. "The common rights of Englishmen," as declared by *Magna Charta*, and the Petition of Right, all justify it.

155. Q. Does the distinction between internal and external taxes exist in the words of the charter?

A. No, I believe not.

156. Q. Then, may they not, by the same interpretation, object to the Parliament's right of external taxation?

A. They never have hitherto. Many arguments have been lately used here to show them, that there is no difference, and that, if you have no right to tax them internally, you have none to tax them externally, or make any other law to bind them. At present they do not reason so; but in time they may possibly be convinced by these arguments.

157. Q. Do not the resolutions of the Pennsylvania assembly say, "all taxes"?

A. If they do, they mean only internal taxes; the same words have not always the same meaning here and in the colonies. By taxes, they mean internal taxes; by duties, they mean customs; these are their ideas of the language.

158. Q. Have you not seen the resolutions of the Massachusetts Bay assembly?

A. I have.

159. Q. Do they not say, that neither external nor internal taxes can be laid on them by Parliament?

A. I don't know that they do; I believe not.

160. Q. If the same colony should say, neither tax nor imposition could be laid, does not that province hold the power of Parliament can lay neither?

A. I suppose, that, by the word *imposition*, they do not

intend to express duties to be laid on goods imported, as *regulations of commerce*.

161. *Q.* What can the colonies mean then by imposition, as distinct from taxes?

*A.* They may mean many things, as impressing of men or of carriages, quartering troops on private houses, and the like ; there may be great impositions that are not properly taxes.

162. *Q.* Is not the post-office rate an internal tax laid by act of Parliament?

*A.* I have answered that.

163. *Q.* Are all parts of the colonies equally able to pay taxes?

*A.* No, certainly ; the frontier parts, which have been ravaged by the enemy, are greatly disabled by that means ; and therefore, in such cases, are usually favored in our tax laws.

164. *Q.* Can we, at this distance, be competent judges of what favors are necessary?

*A.* The Parliament have supposed it, by claiming a right to make tax laws for America ; I think it impossible.

165. *Q.* Would the repeal of the Stamp Act be any discouragement of your manufactures? Will the people that have begun to manufacture decline it?

*A.* Yes, I think they will ; especially if, at the same time, the trade is opened again, so that remittances can be easily made. I have known several instances that make it probable. In the war before last, tobacco being low, and making little remittance, the people of Virginia went generally into family manufactures. Afterwards, when tobacco bore a better price, they returned to the use of British manufactures. So fulling-mills were very much disused in the last

war in Pennsylvania, because bills were then plenty, and remittances could easily be made to Britain for English cloth and other goods.

166. *Q.* If the Stamp Act should be repealed, would it induce the assemblies of America to acknowledge the rights of Parliament to tax them, and would they erase their resolutions?

*A.* No, never.

167. *Q.* Are there no means of obliging them to erase those resolutions?

*A.* None that I know of; they will never do it, unless compelled by force of arms.

168. *Q.* Is there a power on earth that can force them to erase them?

*A.* No power, how great soever, can force men to change their opinions.

169. *Q.* Do they consider the post-office as a tax, or as a regulation?

*A.* Not as a tax, but as a regulation and expediency; every assembly encouraged it, and supported it in its infancy, by grants of money, which they would not otherwise have done; and the people have always paid the postage.

170. *Q.* When did you receive the instructions you mentioned?

*A.* I brought them with me, when I came to England, about fifteen months since.

171. *Q.* When did you communicate that instruction to the minister?

*A.* Soon after my arrival, while the stamping of America was under consideration, and before the bill was brought in.

172. *Q.* Would it be most for the interest of Great

Britain, to employ the hands of Virginia in tobacco, or in manufactures?

A. In tobacco, to be sure.

173. Q. What used to be the pride of the Americans?

A. To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain.

174. Q. What is now their pride?

A. To wear their old clothes over again, till they can make new ones.

*Withdrew.\**

---

\* This EXAMINATION was published in 1767, without the name of printer or of publisher, and the following remarks upon it are contained in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for July of that year: "From this examination of Dr. Franklin, the reader may form a clearer and more comprehensive idea of the state and disposition of America, of the expediency or in expediency of the measure in question, and of the character and conduct of the minister who proposed it, than from all that has been written upon the subject in newspapers and pamphlets, under the titles of essays, letters, speeches, and considerations, from the first moment of its becoming the object of public attention till now. The questions in general are put with great subtilty and judgment, and they are answered with such deep and familiar knowledge of the subject, such precision and perspicuity, such temper and yet such spirit, as do the greatest honor to Dr. Franklin, and justify the general opinion of his character and abilities."

Mr. Sparks very justly says that there was no event in Franklin's life more creditable to his talents and character, or which gave him so much celebrity, as this examination before the House of Commons. His further statement, however, that Franklin's answers were given without premeditation and without knowing beforehand the nature or form of the question that was to be put, is a little too sweeping. In a memorandum which Franklin gave to a friend who wished to know by whom the several questions were put, he admitted that many were put by friends to draw out in answer the substance of what he had before said upon the subject. This statement of Franklin belongs to the history of the examination. It first appeared in Walsh's *Life of Franklin*, published in *Delaplaine's Repository*, and purports to have been written by Dr. Franklin, in reply to a friend who desired to know by whom the several questions were put. His statement is as follows:

"I have numbered the questions," says Dr. Franklin, "for the sake of making references to them.

"*Qu.* 1, is a question of form, asked of every one that is examined.—*Qu.* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, were asked by Mr. Hewitt, a member for Coventry, a friend of ours, and were designed to draw out the answers that follow; being the substance of what I had before said to him on the subject, to remove a common prejudice, that the colonies paid no taxes, and that their governments were supported by burdening the people here; *Qu.* 7, was particularly intended to show by the answer, that Parliament could not properly and equally lay taxes in America, as they could not, by reason of their distance, be acquainted with such circumstances as might make it necessary to spare particular parts.—*Qu.* 8 to 13, asked by Mr. Huske, another friend, to show the impracticability of distributing the stamps in America.—*Qu.* 14, 15, 16, by one of the late administration, an adversary.—*Qu.* 17 to 26, by Mr. Huske again. His questions about the Germans, and about the number of people, were intended to make the opposition to the Stamp Act in America appear more formidable. He asked some others here that the Clerk has omitted, particularly one, I remember.

"There had been a considerable party in the House for saving the honor and right of Parliament, by retaining the Act, and yet making it tolerable to America, by reducing it to a stamp on commissions for profitable offices, and on cards and dice. I had, in conversation with many of them, objected to this, as it would require an establishment for the distributors, which would be a great expense, as the stamps would not be sufficient to pay them, and so the odium and contention would be kept up for nothing. The notion of amending, however, still continued, and one of the most active of the members for promoting it told me, he was sure I could, if I would, assist them to amend the Act in such a manner, that America should have little or no objection to it. 'I must confess,' says I, 'I have thought of one amendment; if you will make it, the Act may remain, and yet the Americans will be quieted. It is a very small amendment, too; it is only the change of a single word.' 'Ay,' says he, 'what is that?' 'It is in that clause where it is said, that from and after the first day of November one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five, there shall be paid, &c. The amendment I would propose is, for *one* read *two*, and then all the rest of the act may stand as it does. I believe it will give nobody in America any uneasiness.' Mr. Huske had heard of this, and, desiring to bring out the same answer in the House, asked me whether I could not propose a small amendment, that would make the act palatable. But, as I thought the answer he wanted too light and ludicrous for the House, I evaded the question.

"*Qu.* 27, 28, 29, I think these were by Mr. Grenville, but I am not certain.—*Qu.* 30, 31, I know not who asked them.—*Qu.* 32 to 35, asked by Mr. Nugent, who was against us. His drift was to establish a notion he had

entertained, that the people in America had a crafty mode of discouraging the English trade by heavy taxes on merchants.—*Qu.* 36 to 42, most of these by Mr. Cooper and other friends, with whom I had discoursed, and were intended to bring out such answers as they desired and expected from me.—*Qu.* 43, uncertain by whom.—*Qu.* 44, 45, 46, by Mr. Nugent again, who I suppose intended to infer, that the poor people in America were better able to pay taxes than the poor in England.—*Qu.* 47, 48, 49, by Mr. Prescott, an adversary.

"*Qu.* 50 to 58, by different members, I cannot recollect who.—*Qu.* 59 to 78, chiefly by the former ministry.—*Qu.* 79 to 82, by friends.—*Qu.* 83, by one of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 84, by Mr. Cooper.—*Qu.* 85 to 90, by some of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 91, 92, by Mr. Grenville.—*Qu.* 93 to 98, by some of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 99, 100, by some friend, I think Sir George Saville.—*Qu.* 101 to 106, by several of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 107 to 114, by friends.—*Qu.* 115 to 117, by Mr. A. Bacon.—*Qu.* 118 to 120, by some of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 121, by an adversary.—*Qu.* 122, by a friend.—*Qu.* 123, 124, by Mr. Charles Townshend.—*Qu.* 125, by Mr. Nugent.—*Qu.* 126, by Mr. Grenville.—*Qu.* 127, by one of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 128, by Mr. G. Grenville.—*Qu.* 129, 130, 131, by Mr. Wellbore Ellis, late Secretary of War.—*Qu.* 132 to 135, uncertain.—*Qu.* 136 to 142, by some of the late ministry, intending to prove that it operated where no service was done, and therefore it was a tax.—*Qu.* 143, by a friend, I forget who.—*Qu.* 144, 145, by C. Townshend.—*Qu.* 146 to 151, by some of the late ministry.—*Qu.* 152 to 157, by Mr. Prescott, and others of the same side.—*Qu.* 158 to 162, by Charles Townshend.—*Qu.* 163, 164, by a friend, I think Sir George Saville.—*Qu.* 165, by some friend.—*Qu.* 166, 167, by an adversary.—*Qu.* 168 to 174, by friends.

"Mr. Nugent made a violent speech next day upon this examination, in which he said, 'We have often experienced Austrian ingratitude and yet we assisted Portugal, we experienced Portuguese ingratitude, and yet we assisted America. But what is Austrian ingratitude, what is the ingratitude of Portugal, compared to this of America? We have fought, bled, and ruined ourselves, to conquer for them; and now they come and tell us to our noses, even at the bar of this House, that they were not obliged to us,' &c. But his clamor was very little minded."

A few years since, I stumbled upon an original edition, in a pamphlet form, of this examination, bearing the following title:

THE EXAMINATION  
OF  
DOCTOR BENJAMIN FRANKLIN  
RELATIVE TO THE REPEAL  
OF THE  
AMERICAN STAMP ACT  
IN MDCCLXVI.

MDCCLXVII.

*Price One Shilling*

No publisher's imprint is given. In the margin, however, and in a chirography which seems scarcely more recent than the printed text, are written what purport to be the "names of the interrogators." When or by whom, or upon what authority, this list was made, there are no indications; but the fact that the list differs so widely from that given in *Delaplaine's*, and the further fact that Franklin so frequently confesses his inability to recall the names of some of his interrogators, seem to justify me in giving this anonymous list here for what it is worth.

As Grenville is always spelt Greenwille, and Burke Bourke, the presumption is that all the names were written by a foreigner, who had taken them from the lips of his informant.

By the Speaker	Nos. 1, 2,	inclusive.
Mr. Huske . . . .	" 3 to 42,	"
Lord Clare . . . .	" 43 to 49, 98 to 103,	"
Mr. Townshend . . . .	" 50 to 77,	"
Mr. Bourke . . . .	" 78 to 89, 106, 107,	"
Mr. Greenwille . . . .	" 90 to 97, 122 to 148,	"
Marquis of Granby . . . .	" 104, 105,	"
Lord North . . . .	" 108 to 121, 149 to 156,	"
Mr. Thurloe, King's counsel-at-law	" 157 to 162,	"
Mr. Cooper, Secretary of the Treasury	" 163 to 173,	"

In this list we do not find the names of Nugent, Ellis, Bacon, or Saville or Prescott, while in the other list we do not find the names of Lord Clare, Burke, Marquis of Granby, Lord North, or Thurlow.—ED.



## CHAPTER V.

Franklin sends his Wife a New Dress on the Repeal of the Stamp Act—  
New Disputes with the Mother Country—Colonies required to provide  
for Soldiers—Lord Chatham—Marriage of Sally Franklin—Experiment  
of making Paper Money not a Legal Tender—Advances of the French  
Ambassador to Franklin—Visits the Continent—First Impressions of  
France and Germany.

1766-1767.

To his wife,      As the Stamp Act is at length repealed,\* I  
dated London,      am willing you should have a new gown, which  
6 April,      you may suppose I did not send sooner, as I  
1766.      knew you would not like to be finer than your neighbours,  
unless in a gown of your own spinning. Had the trade  
between the two countries totally ceased, it was a comfort  
to me to recollect, that I had once been clothed from head  
to foot in woollen and linen of my wife's manufacture, that  
I never was prouder of any dress in my life, and that she

---

\* Dr. Franklin's examination closed the 13th February. The bill for the repeal of the Stamp Act received the royal assent the 18th of the following month. Though this repeal was followed by a Declaratory Act no less offensive in principle than the one it succeeded, affirming "the right of Parliament to bind the colonies in all cases whatsoever," the colonies were frantic with joy, and the enthusiasm for Franklin, both at home and abroad, was unbounded.—ED.

and her daughter might do it again if it was necessary. I told the Parliament, that it was my opinion, before the old clothes of the Americans were worn out, they might have new ones of their own making. I have sent you a fine piece of Pompadour satin, fourteen yards, cost eleven shillings a yard; a silk *negligée* and petticoat of brocaded lutestring for my dear Sally, with two dozen gloves, four bottles of lavender water, and two little reels. The reels are to screw on the edge of the table, when she would wind silk or thread. The skein is to be put over them, and winds better than if held in two hands. There is also a gimcrack corkscrew, which you must get some brother gimcrack to show you the use of. In the chest is a parcel of books for my friend Mr. Coleman, and another for cousin Colbert. Pray did he receive those I sent him before? I send you also a box with three fine cheeses. Perhaps a bit of them may be left when I come home. Mrs. Stevenson has been very diligent and serviceable in getting these things together for you, and presents her best respects, as does her daughter, to both you and Sally. There are two boxes included in your bill of lading for Billy.

I received your kind letter of February 20th. It gives me great pleasure to hear, that our good old friend Mrs. Smith is on the recovery. I hope she has yet many happy years to live. My love to her. I fear, from the account you give of brother Peter,\* that he cannot hold out long. If it should please God, that he leaves us before my return, I would have the postoffice remain under the manage-

---

\* Peter Franklin, the last surviving brother of Dr. Franklin, died July 1st, 1766, in the seventy-fourth year of his age. He had formerly resided at Newport, Rhode Island; but, at the time of his death, he was deputy postmaster in Philadelphia.—S.

ment of their son, till Mr. Foxcroft and I agree how to settle it.

There are some droll prints in the box, which were given me by the painter, and, being sent when I was not at home, were packed up without my knowledge. I think he was wrong to put in Lord Bute, who had nothing to do with the Stamp Act. But it is the fashion to abuse that nobleman, as the author of all mischief.

To his wife,  
dated London,  
13 June,  
1766.

Mrs. Stevenson has made up a parcel of haberdashery for you, which will go by Captain Robinson. She will also send you another cloak, in the room of that we suppose is lost. I wrote to you, that I had been very ill lately. I am now nearly well again, but feeble. To-morrow I set out with my friend Dr. Pringle (now Sir John), on a journey to Pymont, where he goes to drink the waters; but I hope more from the air and exercise, having been used, as you know, to have a journey once a year, the want of which last year has, I believe, hurt me, so that, though I was not quite to say sick, I was often ailing last winter, and through the spring. We must be back at farthest in eight weeks, as my fellow traveller is the Queen's physician, and has leave for no longer, as her Majesty will then be near her time. I purpose to leave him at Pymont, and visit some of the principal cities nearest to it, and call for him again when the time for our return draws nigh.\*

---

\* In the Journals of the Pennsylvania Assembly it is mentioned, that a letter had been received from Dr. Franklin, dated June 10th, 1766, in which he had asked leave of the House to return home in the spring. No motion on the subject is recorded during the session; and, on the first day of the next session, his appointment as agent was renewed.—S.

To Lord Kames, dated London, 11 April, 1767. I received your obliging favor of January the 19th. You have kindly relieved me from the pain I had long been under. You are goodness itself. I ought to have answered yours of December 25th, 1765. I never received a letter, that contained sentiments more suitable to my own. It found me under much agitation of mind on the very important subject it treated. It fortified me greatly in the judgment I was inclined to form, though contrary to the general vogue, on the then delicate and critical situation of affairs between Great Britain and the colonies, and on that weighty point, their *union*. You guessed aright in supposing that I would not be a *mute in that play*. I was extremely busy, attending members of both Houses, informing, explaining, consulting, disputing, in a continual hurry from morning till night, till the affair was happily ended. During the course of its being called before the House of Commons, I spoke my mind pretty freely. Enclosed I send you the imperfect account that was taken of that examination. You will there see how entirely we agree, except in a point of fact, of which you could not but be misinformed; the papers at that time being full of mistaken assertions, that the colonies had been the cause of the war, and had ungratefully refused to bear any part of the expense of it.

I send it you now, because I apprehend some late accidents are likely to revive the contest between the two countries. I fear it will be a mischievous one. It becomes a matter of great importance, that clear ideas should be formed on solid principles, both in Britain and America, of the true political relation between them, and the mutual duties belonging to that relation. Till this is done, they will be often jarring. I know none whose knowledge,

sagacity, and impartiality qualify him so thoroughly for such a service as yours do you. I wish, therefore, you would consider it. You may thereby be the happy instrument of great good to the nation, and of preventing much mischief and bloodshed. I am fully persuaded with you, that a *consolidating union*, by a fair and equal representation of all the parts of this empire in Parliament, is the only firm basis on which its political grandeur and prosperity can be founded. Ireland once wished it, but now rejects it. The time has been, when the colonies might have been pleased with it; they are now *indifferent* about it; and, if it is much longer delayed, they too will *refuse* it. But the pride of this people cannot bear the thought of it, and therefore it will be delayed. Every man in England seems to consider himself as a piece of a sovereign over America; seems to jostle himself into the throne with the King, and talks of *our subjects in the colonies*. The Parliament cannot well and wisely make laws suited to the colonies, without being properly and truly informed of their circumstances, abilities, temper, &c. This it cannot be without representatives from thence; and yet it is fond of this power, and averse to the only means of acquiring the necessary knowledge for exercising it; which is desiring to be *omnipotent*, without being *omniscient*.

I have mentioned, that the contest is likely to be revived. It is on this occasion. In the same session with the Stamp Act, an act was passed to regulate the quartering of soldiers in America; when the bill was first brought in, it contained a clause, empowering the officers to quarter their soldiers in private houses; this we warmly opposed, and got it omitted. The bill passed, however, with a clause, that empty houses, barns, &c., should be hired for them; and that the respective

provinces, where they were, should pay the expense and furnish firing, bedding, drink, and some other articles to the soldiers, *gratis*. There is no way for any province to do this but by the Assembly's making a law to raise the money. The Pennsylvania Assembly has made such a law; the New York Assembly has refused to do it; and now all the talk here is, of sending a force to compel them.

The reasons given by the Assembly to the governor for the refusal are, that they understand the act to mean the furnishing such things to soldiers, only while on their march through the country, and not to great bodies of soldiers, to be fixed, as at present, in the province, the burden in the latter case being greater than the inhabitants can bear; that it would put it in the power of the captain-general to oppress the province at pleasure, &c. But there is supposed to be another reason at bottom, which they intimate, though they do not plainly express it; to wit, that it is of the nature of an *internal tax* laid on them by Parliament, which has no right so to do. Their refusal is here called *rebellion*, and punishment is thought of.

Now waving that point of right, and supposing the legislatures in America subordinate to the legislature of Great Britain, one might conceive, I think, a power in the superior legislature to forbid the inferior legislatures making particular laws; but to enjoin it to make a particular law, contrary to its own judgment, seems improper; an Assembly or Parliament not being an *executive* officer of government, whose duty it is, in law-making, to obey orders, but a *deliberative* body, who are to consider what comes before them, its propriety, practicability, or possibility, and to determine accordingly. The very nature of a Parliament seems to be destroyed by supposing it may be bound and

compelled, by a law of a superior Parliament, to make a law contrary to its own judgment.

Indeed, the act of Parliament in question has not, as in other acts when a duty is enjoined, directed a penalty on neglect or refusal, and a mode of recovering that penalty. It seems, therefore, to the people in America, as a mere requisition, which they are at liberty to comply with or not, as it may suit or not suit the different circumstances of the different provinces. Pennsylvania has therefore voluntarily complied. New York, as I said before, has refused. The ministry that made the act, and all their adherents, call for vengeance. The present ministry are perplexed, and the measures they will finally take on the occasion are yet unknown. But sure I am, that, if *force* is used, great mischief will ensue; the affections of the people of America to this country will be alienated; your commerce will be diminished; and a total separation of interests will be the final consequence.

It is a common, but mistaken notion here, that the colonies were planted at the expense of Parliament, and that therefore the Parliament has a right to tax them, &c. The truth is, they were planted at the expense of private adventurers, who went over there to settle, with leave of the King, given by charter. On receiving this leave, and those charters, the adventurers voluntarily engaged to remain the King's subjects, though in a foreign country; a country which had not been conquered by either King or Parliament, but was possessed by a free people.

When our planters arrived, they purchased the lands of the natives, without putting King or Parliament to any expense. Parliament had no hand in their settlement, was never so much as consulted about their constitution, and took no

kind of notice of them, till many years after they were established. I except only the two modern colonies, or rather attempts to make colonies, (for they succeed but poorly, and as yet hardly deserve the name of colonies,) I mean Georgia and Nova Scotia, which have hitherto been little better than Parliamentary jobs. Thus all the colonies acknowledge the King as their sovereign; his governors there represent his person; laws are made by their Assemblies or little parliaments, with the governor's assent, subject still to the King's pleasure to affirm or annul them. Suits arising in the colonies, and between colony and colony, are determined by the King in Council. In this view, they seem so many separate little states, subject to the same prince. The sovereignty of the King is therefore easily understood. But nothing is more common here than to talk of the *sovereignty* of PARLIAMENT, and the sovereignty of this nation over the colonies; a kind of sovereignty, the idea of which is not so clear, nor does it clearly appear on what foundation it is established. On the other hand, it seems necessary for the common good of the empire, that a power be lodged somewhere, to regulate its general commerce; this can be placed nowhere so properly as in the Parliament of Great Britain; and therefore, though that power has in some instances been executed with great partiality to Britain and prejudice to the colonies, they have nevertheless always submitted to it. Custom-houses are established in all of them, by virtue of laws made here, and the duties instantly paid, except by a few smugglers, such as are here and in all countries; but internal taxes laid on them by Parliament are still and ever will be objected to, for the reason that you will see in the mentioned examination.



Upon the whole, I have lived so great a part of my life in Britain, and have formed so many friendships in it, that I love it, and sincerely wish it prosperity; and therefore wish to see that union, on which alone I think it can be secured and established. As to America, the advantages of such a union to her are not so apparent. She may suffer at present under the arbitrary power of this country; she may suffer for a while in a separation from it; but these are temporary evils which she will outgrow. Scotland and Ireland are differently circumstanced. Confined by the sea, they can scarcely increase in numbers, wealth, and strength, so as to overbalance England. But America, an immense territory, favored by nature with all advantages of climate, soils, great navigable rivers, lakes, &c., must become a great country, populous and mighty; and will, in a less time than is generally conceived, be able to shake off any shackles that may be imposed upon her, and perhaps place them on the imposers. In the mean time every act of oppression will sour their tempers, lessen greatly, if not annihilate, the profits of your commerce with them, and hasten their final revolt; for the seeds of liberty are universally found there, and nothing can eradicate them. And yet there remains among that people so much respect, veneration, and affection for Britain, that, if cultivated prudently, with a kind usage and tenderness for their privileges, they might be easily governed still for ages, without force or any considerable expense. But I do not see here a sufficient quantity of the wisdom, that is necessary to produce such a conduct, and I lament the want of it.\*

---

\* Mr. Tytler, in a note on this letter, after stating the views of Lord Kames on the controversy between Great Britain and the colonies, says: "But, if

I borrowed at Millar's the new edition of your "Principles of Equity," and have read with great pleasure the preliminary discourse on the principles of morality. I have never before met with any thing so satisfactory on the subject. While reading it, I made a few remarks as I went along. They are not of much importance, but I send you the paper.

I know the lady you mention (Mrs. Montague); having, when in England before, met her once or twice at Lord Bath's. I remember I then entertained the same opinion of her that you express. On the strength of your recommendation, I purpose soon to wait on her.

This is unexpectedly grown a long letter. The visit to

---

such were the sentiments of Lord Kames on the question of right between Britain and her colonies, it appears, that, on viewing the matter in the light of expediency, he had very early formed an opinion, that, in the relative situation of the two countries, and looking to the probable chance of increasing animosities, and matters being driven to extremity, either by the erring policy or factious views of some of the leaders in both, it would be a wise measure in the British government to waive the question of strict right, and to consent freely to a consolidating union with America, by giving that country a full representation in Parliament. On this subject he had written to Dr. Franklin as early as the end of the year 1765, at the time when the first intelligence arrived in this country of the disorders occasioned by the attempts to carry the Stamp Act into execution; and he had written a second letter to him on the same subject, in the beginning of 1767. Dr. Franklin's answer to these letters is extremely interesting, and affords a striking specimen of the profound sagacity and foresight of that extraordinary man."

Mr. Tytler adds: "This excellent letter, as appears by a subsequent one, from the same hand, was in all probability intercepted, as it was not received by Lord Kames in the regular course of communication. Dr. Franklin, however, having preserved a copy, transmitted it two years afterwards to his correspondent. The opinions it conveyed were thus probably well known to the persons at the head of administration. It had been happy, if they had paid them that attention, which the wisdom of the counsels they contained deserved."—*TYTLER'S Life of Lord Kames*, Vol. ii. 2d ed. pp. 99, 112.—S.

Scotland, and the "Art of Virtue," we will talk of hereafter.

To Cadwallader Evans,  
dated London, 5 May,  
1767.

I am always glad to hear from you, when you have leisure to write, and I expect no apologies for your not writing. I wish all correspondence was on the foot of writing and answering when one can, or when one is disposed to it, without the compulsions of ceremony. I am pleased with your scheme of a Medical Library at the Hospital; and I fancy I can procure you some donations among my medical friends here, if you will send me a catalogue of what books you already have. Enclosed I send you the only book of the kind in my possession here, having just received it as a present from the author. It is not yet published to be sold, and will not be for some time, till the second part is ready to accompany it.

I thank you for your remarks on the gout. They may be useful to me, who have already had some touches of that distemper. As to Lord Chatham, it is said that his constitution is totally destroyed and gone, partly through the violence of the disease, and partly by his own continual quacking with it. There is at present no access to him. He is said to be not capable of receiving, any more than of giving, advice. But still there is such a deference paid to him, that much business is delayed on his account, that so when entered on it may have the strength of his concurrence, or not be liable to his reprehension, if he should recover his ability and activity. The ministry, we at present have, has not been looked upon, either by itself or others, as settled, which is another cause of postponing every thing not immediately necessary to be considered. New men,

and perhaps new measures, are often expected and apprehended, whence arise continual cabals, factions, and intrigues among the outs and ins, that keep every thing in confusion. And when affairs will mend is very uncertain.

To Joseph Galloway, dated London, 13 June, 1767. In my last of May 20th, I mentioned my hopes that we should at length get over all obstructions to the repeal of the act restraining the legal tender of paper money; but those hopes are now greatly lessened.

The ministry had agreed to the repeal, and the notion that had possessed them, that they might make a revenue from paper money in appropriating the interest by Parliament, was pretty well removed by my assuring them that it was my opinion no colony could make money on those terms, and that the benefits arising to the commerce of this country in America from a plentiful currency would therefore be lost and the repeal answer no end, if the Assemblies were not allowed to appropriate the interest themselves; that the crown might get a great share upon occasional requisitions, I made no doubt, by voluntary appropriations of the Assemblies; but they would never establish such funds as to make themselves unnecessary to government. Those and other reasons, that were urged, seemed to satisfy them, so that we began to think all would go on smoothly, and the merchants prepared their petition, on which the repeal was to be founded. But in the House, when the chancellor of the exchequer had gone through his proposed American revenue, viz. by duties on glass, china ware, paper, pasteboard, colors, tea, &c., Grenville stood up and undervalued them all as trifles; and, says he, "I will tell the honorable gentleman of a revenue, that will produce

something valuable in America ; make paper money for the colonies, issue it upon loan there, take the interest, and apply it as you think proper." Mr. Townshend, finding the House listened to this and seemed to like it, stood up again and said, that was a proposition of his own, which he had intended to make with the rest, but it had slipped his memory, and the gentleman, who must have heard of it, now unfairly would take advantage of that slip and make a merit to himself of a proposition that was another's, and as a proof of it, assured the House a bill was prepared for the purpose, and would be laid before them.

This startled all our friends ; and the merchants concluded to keep back their petition for a while, till things appeared a little clearer, lest their friends in America should blame them, as having furnished foundation for an act, that must have been disagreeable to the colonies. I found the rest of the ministry did not like this proceeding of the chancellor's, but there was no going on with our scheme against his declaration, and, as he daily talked of resigning, there being no good agreement between him and the rest, and as we found the general prejudice against the colonies so strong in the House, that any thing in the shape of a favor to them all was like to meet with opposition, whether he was out or in, I proposed to Mr. Jackson the putting our colony foremost, as we stood in a pretty good light, and asking the favor for us alone. This he agreed might be proper in case the chancellor should go out, and undertook to bring in a bill for that purpose, provided the Philadelphia merchants would petition for it ; and he wished to have such a petition ready to present, if an opening for it should offer. Accordingly I applied to them, and prepared a draft of a petition for them to sign, a copy of which I

send you enclosed. They seemed generally for the measure; but, apprehending the merchants of the other colonies, who had hitherto gone hand in hand with us in all American affairs, might take umbrage if we now separated from them, it was thought right to call a meeting of the whole to consult upon this proposal.

At this meeting I represented to them, as the ground of this measure, that, the colonies being generally out of favor at present, any hard clause relating to paper money in the repealing bill will be more easily received in Parliament, if the bill related to all the colonies; that Pennsylvania, being in some degree of favor, might possibly alone obtain a better act than the whole could do, as it might by government be thought as good policy to show favor where there had been the reverse; that a good act obtained by Pennsylvania might another year, when the resentment against the colonies should be abated, be made use of as a precedent, &c. &c. But, after a good deal of debate it was finally concluded not to precipitate matters, it being very dangerous by any kind of petition to furnish the chancellor with a horse on which he could put what saddle he thought fit. The other merchants seemed rather averse to the Pennsylvania merchants proceeding alone, but said they were certainly at liberty to do as they thought proper. The conclusion of the Pennsylvania merchants was to wait a while, holding the separate petition ready to sign and present, if a proper opening should appear this session, but otherwise to reserve it to the next, when the complexion of ministers and measures may probably be changed. And, as this session now draws to a conclusion, I begin to think nothing will be farther done in it this year.

Mentioning the merchants puts me in mind of some dis-

course I heard among them, that was by no means agreeable. It was said, that, in the opposition they gave the Stamp Act, and their endeavours to obtain the repeal, they had spent at their meetings, and in expresses to all parts of this country, and for a vessel to carry the joyful news to North America, and in the entertainments given our friends of both Houses, &c., near fifteen hundred pounds; that for all this, except from the little colony of Rhode Island, they had not received as much as a *thank ye*; that, on the contrary, the circular letters they had written with the best intentions to the merchants of the several colonies, containing their best and most friendly advice, were either answered with unkind reflections, or contemptuously left without answer; and that the captain of the vessel, whom they sent express with the news, having met with misfortunes, that obliged him to travel by land through all the colonies from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania, was everywhere treated with neglect and contempt, instead of civility and hospitality; and nowhere more than at Philadelphia, where, though he delivered letters to the merchants, that must make him and his errand known to them, no one took the least notice of him. I own I was ashamed to hear all this, but hope there is some mistake in it. I should not have troubled you with this account, but that I think we stand in truth greatly obliged to the merchants, who are a very respectable body, and whose friendship is worth preserving, as it may greatly help us on future occasions; and therefore I wish some decent acknowledgments or thanks were sent from the Assemblies of the colonies, since their correspondents have omitted it.

I have said the less, of late in my letters concerning the petitions, because I hoped this summer to have an oppor-

tunity of communicating every thing *viva voce*, and there are particulars that cannot safely be trusted to paper. Perhaps I may be more determined as to returning or staying another winter, when I receive my next letters from you and my other friends in Philadelphia.

We got the chancellor to drop his salt duty. And the merchants trading to Portugal and Spain, he says, have made such a clamor about the intention of suffering ships to go directly with wine, fruit, and oil, from those countries to America, that he has dropped that scheme, and we are it seems to labor a little longer under the inconveniences of the restraint.

It is said the bill to suspend the legislatures of New York and Georgia, till they comply with the act of Parliament for quartering soldiers, will pass this session. I fear that imprudencies on both sides may, step by step, bring on the most mischievous consequences. It is imagined here, that this act will enforce immediate compliance; and, if the people should be quiet, content themselves with the laws they have, and let the matter rest, till in some future war the King wanting aids from them, and finding himself restrained in his legislation by the act as much as the people, shall think fit by his ministers to propose the repeal, the Parliament will be greatly disappointed; and perhaps it may take this turn. I wish nothing worse may happen.\*

---

\* Besides the offence given to the government by the legislature of New York, in refusing to provide for quartering soldiers, the merchants of the city of New York petitioned for the repeal of the acts of Parliament restraining the trade of the colonies. The petition was presented to Parliament and read, but was then ordered to lie on the table, and no further notice was taken of it. The conduct of the New Yorkers, on both these accounts,



The present ministry will probably continue through this session. But their disagreement, with the total inability of Lord Chatham, through sickness, to do any business, must bring on some change before next winter. I wish it may be for the better, but fear the contrary.

**To Miss Mary Stevenson,**  
dated Craven  
St., 17 June,  
1767.

We were greatly disappointed yesterday, that we had not the pleasure, promised us, of our dear Polly's company. Your good mother would have me write a line in answer to your letter. A muse, you must know, visited me this morning ! I see you are surprised, as I was. I never saw one before,

---

raised against them a great outcry in England ; and Franklin, according to his custom in such cases, endeavored to quiet the clamor and vindicate his countrymen, by an accurate representation of the circumstances in the public papers. Among his manuscripts I find a fragment of an article, which seems to relate to this occasion, signed "*A Friend to Both Countries.*" The closing part only remains, and is as follows :

" — or refuses to comply with an act of Parliament, is a rebel, I am afraid we have many more rebels among us than we are aware of ; among others, they that have not registered the weights of their plate, and paid the duty, are all rebels ; and these, I think, are not a few ; to whom may be added the acting rebels that wear French silks and cambrics.

" As to the petition mentioned above, I have been informed it is from a number of private persons, merchants of New York, stating their opinion, that several restraints in the acts of trade, laid on the commerce of the colonies, are not only prejudicial to the colonies, but to the mother country. They give their reasons for this opinion. These reasons are to be judged of here. If they are found to be good, and supported by facts, one would think, that, instead of censure, those merchants might deserve thanks. If otherwise, the petition may be laid aside. Petitioning is not rebellion. The very nature of a petition acknowledges the power it petitions to, and the subjection of the petitioner.

" But, in party views, molehills are often magnified to mountains ; and when the wolf is determined on a quarrel with the lamb, up stream or down stream is all one. Pretences are easily found or made. Reason and justice are out of the question."—S.

and shall never see another, so I took the opportunity of her help to put the answer into verse, because I was some verse in your debt ever since you sent me the last pair of garters.

This muse appeared to be no housewife. I suppose few of them are. She was *dressed* (if the expression is allowable) in an *undress*, a kind of slatternly *negligé*, neither neat nor clean, nor well made; and she has given the same sort of dress to my piece. On reviewing it, I would have reformed the lines, and made them all of a length, as I am told lines ought to be; but I find I cannot lengthen the short ones without stretching them on the rack, and I think it would be equally cruel to cut off any part of the long ones. Besides the superfluity of *these* makes up for the deficiency of *those*; and so, from a principle of justice, I leave them at full length, that I may give you, at least in one sense of the word, *good measure*.

To his wife,  
dated London, 22 June,  
1767.

It seems now as if I should stay here another winter, and therefore I must leave it to your judgment to act in the affair of our daughter's match, as shall seem best.\* If you think it a suitable one, I suppose the sooner it is completed the better. In that case I would advise, that you do not make an expensive feasting wedding, but conduct every thing with frugality and economy, which our circumstances now require to be observed in all our expenses. For, since my partnership with Mr. Hall is expired, a great source of our income is cut off; and, if I should lose the postoffice, which, among the many changes here, is far from being unlikely, we should

---

\* Sally Franklin, the doctor's only daughter, married Richard Bache, October 29, 1767. She was twenty-three years of age.—ED.

be reduced to our rents and interest of money for a subsistence, which will by no means afford the chargeable housekeeping and entertainments we have been used to.

For my own part, I live here as frugally as possible not to be destitute of the comforts of life, making no dinners for anybody and contenting myself with a single dish when I dine at home ; and yet such is the dearness of living here in every article, that my expenses amaze me. I see, too, by the sums you have received in my absence, that yours are very great ; and I am very sensible that your situation naturally brings you a great many visiters, which occasions an expense not easily to be avoided, especially when one has been long in the practice and habit of it. But, when people's incomes are lessened, if they cannot proportionably lessen their outgoings, they must come to poverty. If we were young enough to begin business again, it might be another matter ; but I doubt we are past it, and business not well managed ruins one faster than no business. In short, with frugality and prudent care we may subsist decently on what we have, and leave it entire to our children ; but without such care we shall not be able to keep it together ; it will melt away like butter in the sunshine, and we may live long enough to feel the miserable consequences of our indiscretion.

I know very little of the gentleman or his character, nor can I at this distance. I hope his expectations are not great of any fortune to be had with our daughter before our death. I can only say, that, if he proves a good husband to her and a good son to me, he shall find me as good a father as I can be ; but at present, I suppose you would agree with me, that we cannot do more than fit her out handsomely in clothes and furniture, not exceeding in the

whole five hundred pounds of value. For the rest, they must depend, as you and I did, on their own industry and care, as what remains in our hands will be barely sufficient for our support, and not enough for them when it comes to be divided at our decease.

Sally Franklin is well. Her father, who had not seen her for a twelvemonth, came lately and took her home with him for a few weeks to see her friends. He is very desirous I should take her with me to America.

I suppose the blue room is too blue, the wood being of the same color with the paper, and so looks too dark. I would have you finish it as soon as you can, thus ; paint the wainscoat a dead white ; paper the walls blue, and tack the gilt border round just above the surbase and under the cornice. If the paper is not equally colored when pasted on, let it be brushed over again with the same color, and let the *papier maché* musical figures be tacked to the middle of the ceiling. When this is done, I think it will look very well.

I am glad to hear that Sally keeps up and increases the number of her friends. The best wishes of a fond father for her happiness always attend her.

To Samuel Franklin,\* dated London, 17 July, 1767. I should sooner have answered your kind letter of last year, but postponed it from time to time, having mislaid the print I intended to send you, which I have now found and send herewith. I am glad to hear of the welfare of yourself and your family, which I hope will long continue. My love to them all.

It gives me pleasure whenever I find that my endeavours

---

\* The grandson of Benjamin Franklin, Dr. Franklin's uncle, after whom he was named.—ED.

to serve America are acceptable to my friends there. Your kind notices of them are very obliging.

I find here but two of our relations remaining, that bear the name of Franklin, viz. Thomas Franklin of Lutterworth in Leicestershire, a dyer, and his daughter Sally Franklin, about fourteen years of age, who has been with me in London about a year, and sends her duty to you. Thomas Franklin is the grandson of John Franklin, your grandfather's brother. There are besides still living, Eleanor Morris, an old maiden lady, daughter of your grandfather's sister Hannah; and also Hannah Walker, granddaughter of his brother John. Mrs. Walker has three sons. She lives at Westbury, in Buckinghamshire, and Mrs. Morris with her. And these are the whole. It is thought best by my friends that I should continue here another winter.

To his wife,  
dated London,  
5 Aug.,  
1767.

Captain Ourry dined here a few days since, and thanks you for remembering him, desiring his respects to you and Sally. Mr. Strahan and family, the same. I received the bill sent by Mr. Potts, and suppose it will be duly paid. You will return him the overplus. I wish I could take my passage this time with Captain Falconer. I was on board the other day with Mr. and Mrs. West,\* Mrs. Stevenson, and Mrs. Hopkinson, to drink tea. It is a fine ship, and I think it not unlikely that I may go with him next time, as he is a very kind, good friend, whom I much respect.

I am glad you go sometimes to Burlington. The harmony you mention in our family and among our children gives

---

\* Mr. Benjamin West, the painter, with whom Dr. Franklin was long on terms of intimate friendship.—ED.

me great pleasure. I am sorry to hear of the death of our good old friend Debby Norris. She was a worthy good woman and will be missed. If I can in any shape be of service to Mr. Francis, you may depend I shall do it, being much concerned for his misfortune. I am told the affair is like to turn out better for him than was expected. Sally Franklin is now in the country with her father. She is an only child, and a very good girl.

I received the watch chain, which you say you send to be put to rights. I do not see what it wants. Mrs. Stevenson says it is too old-fashioned for Sally, and advised sending the watch also, to be changed away for a new watch and chain.

In your last letters you say nothing concerning Mr. Bache. The misfortune, that has lately happened to his affairs, though it may not lessen his character as an honest or a prudent man, will probably induce him to forbear entering hastily into a state, that must require a great addition to his expense, when he will be less able to supply it. If you think that, in the mean time, it will be some amusement to Sally to visit her friends here, and return with me, I should have no objection to her coming over with Captain Falconer, provided Mrs. Falconer comes at the same time, as is talked of. I think too it might be some improvement to her. I am at present meditating a journey somewhere, perhaps to Bath or Bristol; as I begin to find a little giddiness in my head, a token that I want the exercise I have yearly been accustomed to. I long to see you, and be with you.

To Joseph  
Galloway, da-  
ted London,  
8 Aug., 1767.

The confusion among our great men still continues as much as ever, and a melancholy thing it is to consider, that, instead of employing the present leisure of peace in such measures as might

extend our commerce, pay off our debts, secure allies, and increase the strength and ability of the nation to support a future war, the whole seems to be wasted in party contentions about places of power and profit, in court intrigues and cabals, and in abusing one another.

There has lately been an attempt to make a kind of coalition of parties in a new ministry ; but it fell through, and the present set is like to continue for some time longer, which I am rather pleased with, as some of those who were proposed to be introduced are professed adversaries to America, which is now made one of the distinctions of party here ; those who have in the two last sessions shown a disposition to favor us, being called by way of reproach, Americans ; while the others, adherents to Grenville and Bedford, value themselves on being true to the interests of Britain, and zealous for maintaining its dignity and sovereignty over the colonies.

This distinction will, it is apprehended, be carried much higher in the next session, for the political purpose of influencing the ensuing election. It is already given out that the compliance of New York, in providing for the quarters, without taking notice of its being done in obedience to the act of Parliament, is evasive and unsatisfactory ; that it is high time to put the right and power of this country to tax the colonies out of dispute, by an act of taxation, effectually carried into execution, and that all the colonies should be obliged explicitly to acknowledge that right. Every step is taking to render the taxing of America a popular measure here, by continually insisting on the topics of our wealth and flourishing circumstances, while this country is loaded with debt, great part of it incurred on our account, the distress of the poor here by the multitude and weight of taxes,

&c. &c. ; and, though the traders and manufacturers may possibly be kept in our interest, the idea of an American tax is very pleasing to the landed men, who therefore readily receive and propagate these sentiments wherever they have influence.

If such a bill should be brought in, it is hard to say what would be the event of it, or what would be the effects. Those who oppose it, though they should be strong enough to throw it out, would be stigmatized as Americans, betrayers of Old England, &c., and perhaps, our friends by this means being excluded, a majority of our adversaries may get in, and then the act infallibly passes the following session. To avoid the danger of such exclusion, perhaps little opposition will be given, and then it passes immediately. I know not what to advise on this occasion, but that we should all do our endeavours on both sides of the water to lessen the present unpopularity of the American cause, conciliate the affections of people here towards us, increase by all possible means the number of our friends, and be careful not to weaken their hands and strengthen those of our enemies by rash proceedings on our side, the mischiefs of which are inconceivable. Some of our friends have thought that a publication of my *Examination* here might answer some of the above purposes, by removing prejudices, refuting falsehoods, and demonstrating our merits with regard to this country. It is accordingly printed, and has a great run. I have another piece in hand, which I intend to put out about the time of the meeting of Parliament, if those I consult with shall judge that it may be of service.\*

---

\* Probably the piece entitled, "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768." See Sparks's Works of Franklin, vol. iv, p. 242.—ED.



The next session of Parliament will probably be a short one, on account of the following election; and I am now advised, by some of our great friends here, to see that out, not returning to America till the spring. My presence indeed is necessary there to settle some private affairs. Unforeseen and unavoidable difficulties have hitherto obstructed our proceedings in the main intent of my coming over, and perhaps (though I think my being here has not been altogether unserviceable) our friends in the Assembly may begin to be discouraged and tired of the expense. If that should be the case, I would not have you propose to continue me as agent at the meeting of the new Assembly. My endeavours to serve the province, in what I may while I remain here, shall not be lessened by that omission.

I am glad you have made a trial of paper money, *not a legal tender*. The quantity being small may perhaps be kept in full credit notwithstanding; and, if that can be avoided, I am not for applying here again very soon for a repeal of the restraining act. I am afraid an ill use will be made of it. The plan of our adversaries is to render Assemblies in America useless, and to have a revenue, independent of their grants, for all the purposes of their defence and supporting governments among them. It is our interest to prevent this. And, that they may not lay hold of our necessities for paper money, to draw a revenue from that article whenever they grant us the liberty we want, of making it a legal tender, I wish some other method may be fallen upon of supporting its credit. What think you of getting all the merchants, traders, and principal people of all sorts, to join in petitions to the Assembly for a moderate emission, the petition being accompanied with a mutual engagement to take it in all dealings at the rates fixed by law? Such an

engagement had a great effect in fixing the value and rates of our gold and silver. Or, perhaps, a bank might be established that would answer all purposes. Indeed I think with you, that those merchants here, who have made difficulties on the subject of the legal tender, have not understood their own interest. For there can be no doubt, that, should a scarcity of money continue among us, we shall take off less of their merchandise, and attend more to manufacturing, and raising the necessities and superfluities of life among ourselves, which we now receive from them. And perhaps this consequence would attend our making no paper money at all of any sort, that, being thus by want of cash driven to industry and frugality, we should gradually become more rich without their trade, than we can possibly be with it, and, by keeping in the country the real cash that comes into it, have in time a quantity sufficient for all our occasions. But I suppose our people will scarce have patience to wait for this.

I have received the printed votes, but not the laws. I hear nothing yet of any objection made by the Proprietaries to any of them at the Board of Trade.

Please to present my duty to the Assembly, with thanks for their care of me, and assure them of my most faithful services.

To William  
Franklin,  
Governor of  
New Jersey,  
dated London,  
28 Aug.,  
1767.

Last week I dined at Lord Shelburne's, and had a long conversation with him and Mr. Conway (there being no other company) on the subject of reducing American expense. They have it in contemplation to return the management of Indian affairs into the hands of the several provinces on which the nations border, that the colonies

may bear the charge of treaties, &c., which they think will then be managed more frugally, the treasury being tired with the immense drafts of the superintendents. I took the opportunity of urging it as one means of saving expense in supporting the outposts, that a settlement should be made in the Illinois country; expatiated on the various advantages, viz. furnishing provisions cheaper to the garrisons, securing the country, retaining the trade, raising a strength there, which on occasion of a future war might easily be poured down the Mississippi upon the lower country, and into the Bay of Mexico, to be used against Cuba or Mexico itself. I mentioned your plan, its being approved by Sir William Johnson, the readiness and ability of the gentlemen concerned to carry the settlement into execution, with very little expense to the crown, &c. The secretaries appeared finally to be fully convinced, and there remained no obstacle but the Board of Trade, which was to be brought over privately, before the matter should be referred to them officially. In case of laying aside the superintendents, a provision was thought of for Sir William Johnson.\*

---

\* The subject here introduced, which is frequently mentioned in letters to his son, relates to an application by a company to the crown for the grant of a tract of land west of the Alleghanies, with the design of establishing a colony there. It was called *Walpole's Grant*, from the circumstance of Mr. Thomas Walpole having been the principal person concerned in procuring it. The scheme originated with Colonel Croghan, William Franklin, and Sir William Johnson. The project is intimated, apparently at its first stage, in the following extract from a letter written by Governor Franklin to his father.

"Colonel Croghan is highly incensed at the treatment he has received from the proprietary officers in Pennsylvania, and has been a means of bringing Sir William Johnson and General Gage to think favorably of the Assembly, and to wish them success. A few of us, from his encouragement, have formed a company to purchase of the French, settled at the Illinois, such lands as they have a good title to, and are inclined to dispose of. But, as I thought it would be of little avail to buy lands in that country, unless a

x\*

We had a good deal of farther discourse on American affairs, particularly on paper money. Lord Shelburne declared himself fully convinced of the utility of taking off the restraint, by my answer to the Report of the Board of Trade. General Conway had not seen it, and desired me to send it to him, which I did next morning. They gave me expectation of a repeal next session, Lord Clare being come over; but they said there was some difficulty with others at the Board, who had signed that Report; for there was a good deal in what Soame Jenyns had laughingly said, when asked to concur in some measure, *I have no kind of objection to it, provided we have heretofore signed nothing to the contrary.*

In this conversation I did not forget our main Pennsylvania business, and I think made some farther progress, though but little. The two secretaries seemed intent upon preparing business for next Parliament, which makes me think, that the late projects of changes are now quite over, and that they expect to continue in place. But whether they will do much or little, I cannot say.

Du Guerchy, the French ambassador, is gone home, and

---

colony were established there, I have drawn up some proposals for that purpose, which are much approved of by Colonel Croghan and the other gentlemen concerned in Philadelphia, and are sent by them to Sir William Johnson for his sentiments, and, when we receive them, the whole will be forwarded to you. It is proposed that the company shall consist of twelve, now in America, and, if you like the proposals, you will be at liberty to add yourself, and such gentlemen of character and fortune in England, as you may think will be most likely to promote the undertaking."—*April 30th, 1766.*

The plan of purchasing of the French seems to have been subsequently abandoned, and the company applied to the crown for a tract of unsettled lands mostly between the Alleghanies and the Ohio River. Lord Hillsborough opposed the petition, and one of Franklin's ablest papers was written in reply to a report made by him on the subject to the Board of Trade.—S.

Monsieur Durand is left minister plenipotentiary. He is extremely curious to inform himself in the affairs of America; pretends to have a great esteem for me, on account of the abilities shown in my examination; has desired to have all my political writings, invited me to dine with him, was very inquisitive, treated me with great civility, makes me visits, &c. I fancy that intriguing nation would like very well to meddle on occasion, and blow up the coals between Britain and her colonies; but I hope we shall give them no opportunity.

I write this in a great hurry, being setting out in an hour on another journey with my steady, good friend, Sir John Pringle. We propose to visit Paris. Durand has given me letters of recommendation to the Lord knows who. I am told I shall meet with great respect there;\* but winds change, and perhaps it will be full as well if I do not. We shall be gone six weeks. I have a little private commission to transact, of which more another time.

Communicate nothing of this letter but privately to our friend Galloway.

**To Miss Mary Stevenson,**      Soon after I left you in that agreeable society  
dated Paris,      at Bromley, I took the resolution of making a  
14 September,      trip with Sir John Pringle into France. We  
1767.      set out on the 28th past. All the way to  
Dover we were furnished with postchaises, hung so as to  
lean forward, the top coming down over one's eyes, like a  
hood, as if to prevent one's seeing the country; which

---

\* This is the first intimation we have from Franklin of the tendency of France and the British American colonies to gravitate towards a common centre, a tendency pregnant with such important consequences.—ED.

being one of my great pleasures, I was engaged in perpetual disputes with the innkeepers, ostlers, and postilions, about getting the straps taken up a hole or two before, and let down as much behind, they insisting that the chaise leaning forward was an ease to the horses, and that the contrary would kill them. I suppose the chaise leaning forward looks to them like a willingness to go forward, and that its hanging back shows reluctance. They added other reasons, that were no reasons at all, and made me, as upon a hundred other occasions, almost wish that mankind had never been endowed with a reasoning faculty, since they know so little how to make use of it, and so often mislead themselves by it, and that they had been furnished with a good sensible instinct instead of it.

At Dover, the next morning, we embarked for Calais with a number of passengers, who had never before been at sea. They would previously make a hearty breakfast, because, if the wind should fail, we might not get over till supper time. Doubtless they thought, that, when they had paid for their breakfast, they had a right to it, and that, when they had swallowed it, they were sure of it. But they had scarce been out half an hour, before the sea laid claim to it, and they were obliged to deliver it up. So that it seems there are uncertainties, even beyond those between the cup and the lip. If ever you go to sea, take my advice, and live sparingly a day or two beforehand. The sickness, if any, will be lighter and sooner over. We got to Calais that evening.

Various impositions we suffered from boatmen, porters, and the like, on both sides the water. I know not which are most rapacious, the English or French, but the latter have, with their knavery, most politeness.

The roads we found equally good with ours in England, in some places paved with smooth stones, like our new streets, for many miles together, and rows of trees on each side, and yet there are no turnpikes. But then the poor peasants complained to us grievously, that they were obliged to work upon the roads full two months in the year, without being paid for their labor. Whether this is truth, or whether, like Englishmen, they grumble, cause or no cause, I have not yet been able fully to inform myself.

The women we saw at Calais, on the road, at Boulogne, and in the inns and villages, were generally of dark complexions; but arriving at Abbeville we found a sudden change, a multitude of both women and men in that place appearing remarkably fair. Whether this is owing to a small colony of spinners, wool-combers, and weavers, brought hither from Holland with the woollen manufactory about sixty years ago, or to their being less exposed to the sun, than in other places, their business keeping them much within doors, I know not. Perhaps, as in some other cases, different causes may club in producing the effect, but the effect itself is certain. Never was I in a place of greater industry, wheels and looms going in every house.

As soon as we left Abbeville, the swarthiness returned. I speak generally; for here are some fair women at Paris, who, I think, are not whitened by art. As to rouge, they don't pretend to imitate nature in laying it on. There is no gradual diminution of the color, from the full bloom in the middle of the cheek to the faint tint near the sides, nor does it show itself differently in different faces. I have not had the honor of being at any lady's toilette to see how it is laid on, but I fancy I can tell you how it is or may be done. Cut a hole of three inches diameter in a piece of

paper ; place it on the side of your face in such a manner, as that the top of the hole may be just under the eye ; then, with a brush dipped in the color, paint face and paper together ; so when the paper is taken off, there will remain a round patch of red exactly the form of the hole. This is the mode, from the actresses on the stage upwards through all ranks of ladies to the princesses of the blood ; but it stops there, the Queen not using it, having in the serenity, complacency, and benignity, that shine so eminently in, or rather through her countenance, sufficient beauty, though now an old woman, to do extremely well without it.

You see I speak of the Queen as if I had seen her ; and so I have, for you must know I have been at court. We went to Versailles last Sunday, and had the honor of being presented to the King ; he spoke to both of us very graciously and very cheerfully, is a handsome man, has a very lively look, and appears younger than he is. In the evening we were at the *Grand Couvert*, where the family sup in public. The table was half a hollow square, the service gold. When either made a sign for drink, the word was given by one of the waiters ; *A boire pour le Roi*, or *A boire pour la Reine*. Then two persons came from within, the one with wine and the other with water in *carafes* ; each drank a little glass of what he brought, and then put both the *carafes* with a glass on a salver, and then presented it. Their distance from each other was such, as that other chairs might have been placed between any two of them. An officer of the court brought us up through the crowd of spectators, and placed Sir John so as to stand between the Queen and Madame Victoire. The King talked a good deal to Sir John, asking many questions about our royal family ; and did me too the honor of taking some notice



of me ; that is saying enough ; for I would not have you think me so much pleased with this King and Queen, as to have a whit less regard than I used to have for ours. No Frenchman shall go beyond me in thinking my own King and Queen the very best in the world, and the most amiable.

Versailles has had infinite sums laid out in building it and supplying it with water. Some say the expenses exceeded eighty millions sterling. The range of buildings is immense ; the garden-front most magnificent, all of hewn stone ; the number of statues, figures, urns, &c., in marble and bronze of exquisite workmanship, is beyond conception. But the water-works are out of repair, and so is great part of the front next the town, looking with its shabby, half-brick walls, and broken windows, not much better than the houses in Durham Yard. There is, in short, both at Versailles and Paris, a prodigious mixture of magnificence and negligence, with every kind of elegance except that of cleanliness, and what we call *tidiness*. Though I must do Paris the justice to say, that in two points of cleanliness they exceed us. The water they drink, though from the river, they render as pure as that of the best spring, by filtering it through cisterns filled with sand ; and the streets with constant sweeping are fit to walk in, though there is no paved footpath. Accordingly, many well dressed people are constantly seen walking in them. The crowd of coaches and chairs for this reason is not so great. Men, as well as women, carry umbrellas in their hands, which they extend in case of rain or too much sun ; and, a man with an umbrella not taking up more than three foot square, or nine square feet of the street, when, if in a coach, he would take up two hundred and forty square feet, you can easily con-

ceive, that, though the streets here are narrow, they may be much less encumbered. They are extremely well paved, and the stones, being generally cubes, when worn on one side, may be turned and become new.

The civilities we everywhere receive give us the strongest impressions of the French politeness. It seems to be a point settled here universally, that strangers are to be treated with respect; and one has just the same deference shown one here by being a stranger, as in England by being a lady. The custom-house officers at Port St. Denis, as we entered Paris, were about to seize two dozen of excellent Bordeaux wine given us at Boulogne, and which we brought with us; but, as soon as they found we were strangers, it was immediately remitted on that account. At the Church of Notre Dame, where we went to see a magnificent illumination, with figures, &c., for the deceased Dauphiness, we found an immense crowd, who were kept out by guards; but, the officer being told that we were strangers from England, he immediately admitted us, accompanied and showed us every thing. Why don't we practise this urbanity to Frenchmen? Why should they be allowed to outdo us in any thing?

Here is an exhibition of painting, like ours in London, to which multitudes flock daily. I am not connoisseur enough to judge which has most merit. Every night, Sundays not excepted, here are plays or operas; and, though the weather has been hot, and the houses full, one is not incommoded by the heat so much as with us in winter. They must have some way of changing the air, that we are not acquainted with. I shall inquire into it.

Travelling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance. It is but about a fortnight since we left Lon-

don, but the variety of scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to six months living in one place. Perhaps I have suffered a greater change, too, in my own person, than I could have done in six years at home. I had not been here six days, before my tailor and perruquier had transformed me into a Frenchman. Only think what a figure I make in a little bag-wig and with naked ears! They told me I was become twenty years younger, and looked very gallant.

This letter shall cost you a shilling, and you may consider it cheap, when you reflect, that it has cost me at least fifty guineas to get into the situation, that enables me to write it. Besides, I might, if I had stayed at home, have won perhaps two shillings of you at cribbage. By the way, now I mention cards, let me tell you that quadrille is now out of fashion here, and English whist all the mode at Paris and the court.

And pray look upon it as no small matter, that, surrounded as I am by the glories of the world, and amusements of all sorts, I remember you, and Dolly, and all the dear good folks at Bromley. It is true, I cannot help it, but must and ever shall remember you all with pleasure.

## CHAPTER VI.

The Walpole Grant again—Change of Ministry—Hillsborough named Secretary of State for America—Franklin edits "The Farmer's Letters"—Particulars of his Election to the Royal Society—Powers of Parliament over the Colonies defined—Corruption at Elections—Dissolution of Parliament.

1767-1768.

To William Franklin, dated London, 25 Nov., 1767. I THINK the New Yorkers have been very discreet in forbearing to write and publish against the late act of Parliament. I wish the Boston people had been as quiet, since Governor Bernard has sent over all their violent papers to the ministry, and wrote them word that he daily expected a rebellion. He did indeed afterwards correct this extravagance, by writing again, that he now understood those papers were approved by few, and disliked by all the sober, sensible people of the province. A certain noble Lord expressed himself to me with some disgust and contempt of Bernard on this occasion, saying he ought to have known his people better, than to impute to the whole country sentiments, that perhaps are only scribbled by some madman in a garret; that he appeared to be too fond of contention, and mistook the matter greatly, in supposing such letters as he wrote were acceptable to the ministry. I have heard nothing of the appoint-

ment of General Clark to New York ; but I know he is a friend of Lord Shelburne's, and the same that recommended Mr. Maclean to be his secretary. Perhaps it might be talked of in my absence.

The commissioners for the American Board went hence while I was in France. You know before this time who they are, and how they are received, which I want to hear. Mr. Williams, who is gone in some office with them, is brother to our cousin Williams of Boston ; but I assure you I had not the least share in his appointment, having, as I told you before, carefully kept out of the way of that whole affair.

As soon as I received Mr. Galloway's, Mr. Samuel Whar-ton's, and Mr. Croghan's letters on the subject of the boundary, I communicated them immediately to Lord Shelburne. He invited me the next day to dine with him. Lord Clare was to have been there, but did not come. There was nobody but Mr. Maclean. My Lord knew nothing of the boundary's having ever been agreed on by Sir William, had sent the letters to the Board of Trade, desiring search to be made there for Sir William's letters, and ordered Mr. Maclean to search the secretary's office, who found nothing. We had much discourse about it, and I pressed the importance of despatching orders immediately to Sir William to complete the affair. His Lordship asked who was to make the purchase, that is, be at the expense. I said, that, if the line included any lands within the grants of the charter colonies, they should pay the purchase money of such proportion. If any within the proprietary grants, they should pay their proportion ; but that what was within royal governments, where the King granted the lands, the crown should pay for that proportion. His Lordship was

pleased to say, he thought this reasonable. He finally desired me to go to Lord Clare, as from him, and urge the business there, which I undertook to do.

Among other things at this conversation, we talked of the new settlement. His Lordship told me he had himself drawn up a paper of reasons for those settlements, which he laid before the King in Council, acquainting them that he did not offer them merely as his own sentiments; they were what he had collected from General Amherst, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jackson, three gentlemen that were allowed to be the best authorities for anything that related to America. I think he added that the Council seemed to approve of the design. I know it was referred to the Board of Trade, who I believe have not yet reported on it, and I doubt will report against it. My Lord told me one pleasant circumstance, viz. that he had shown his paper to the Dean of Gloucester (Tucker), to hear his opinion of the matter; who very sagaciously remarked, that he was sure that paper was drawn up by Dr. Franklin; he saw him in every paragraph; adding, that Dr. Franklin wanted to remove the seat of government to America; that, says he, is his constant plan.

I waited next morning upon Lord Clare, and pressed the matter of the boundary closely upon him. He said they could not find they had ever received any letters from Sir William concerning this boundary, but were searching farther; agreed to the necessity of settling it; but thought there would be some difficulty about who should pay the purchase money; for that this country was already so loaded, it could bear no more. We then talked of the new colonies. I found he was inclined to think one near the mouth of the Ohio might be of use in securing the country, but did not

much approve that at Detroit. And, as to the trade, he imagined it would be of little consequence, if we had all the peltry to be purchased there, but supposed our traders would sell it chiefly to the French and Spaniards at New Orleans, as he heard they had hitherto done.

At the same time that we Americans wish not to be judged of, in the gross, by particular papers written by anonymous scribblers and published in the colonies, it would be well if we could avoid falling into the same mistake in America, in judging of ministers here by the libels printed against them. The enclosed is a very abusive one, in which if there is any foundation of truth, it can only be in the insinuation contained in the words "*after eleven adjournments*," that they are too apt to postpone business; but, if they have given any occasion for this reflection, there are reasons and circumstances that may be urged in their excuse.

It gives me pleasure to hear, that the people of the other colonies are not insensible of the zeal, with which I occasionally espouse their respective interests, as well as the interests of the whole. I shall continue to do so as long as I reside here and am able.

To Joseph Galloway, dated London, 1 Dec., 1767. I am inclined to think with you, that the small sum you have issued to discharge the public debts only will not be materially affected in its credit for want of the legal tender, considering especially the present extreme want of money in the province. You appear to me to point out the true cause of the general distress, viz. the late luxurious mode of living introduced by a too great plenty of cash. It is indeed amazing to consider, that we had a quantity sufficient before the war began, and that the war added immensely to that quan-

tity, by the sums spent among us by the crown, and the paper struck and issued in the province; and now in so few years all the money spent by the crown is gone away, and has carried with it all the gold and silver we had before, leaving us bare and empty, and at the same time more in debt to England than ever we were. But I am inclined to think, that the mere making more money will not mend our circumstances, if we do not return to that industry and frugality, which were the fundamental causes of our former prosperity. I shall nevertheless do my utmost this winter to obtain the repeal of the act restraining the legal tender, if our friends the merchants think it practicable, and will heartily espouse the cause; and, in truth, they have full as much interest in the event as we have.

The present ministry, it is now thought, are likely to continue at least till a new Parliament; so that our apprehensions of a change, and that Mr. Grenville would come in again, seem over for the present. He behaves as if a little out of his head on the article of America, which he brings into every debate without rhyme or reason, when the matter has not the least connexion with it. Thus, at the beginning of this session on the debate upon the King's speech, he tired everybody, even his friends, with a long harangue about and against America, of which there was not a word in the speech. Last Friday he produced in the House a late Boston Gazette, which he said denied the legislative authority of Parliament, was treasonable, rebellious, &c., and moved it might be read, and that the House would take cognizance of it; but, it being moved on the other hand that Mr. Grenville's motion should be postponed to that day six months, it was carried without a division; and, as it is known that this Parliament will expire before that time,



it was equivalent to a total rejection of the motion. The Duke of Bedford, too, it seems, moved in vain for a consideration of this paper in the House of Lords. These are favorable symptoms of the present disposition of Parliament towards America, which I hope no conduct of the Americans will give just cause of altering.

To William Franklin, dated London, 10 Dec., 1767. The resolutions of the Boston people concerning trade make a great noise here. Parliament has not yet taken notice of them, but the newspapers are in full cry against America. Colonel Onslow told me at court last Sunday, that I could not conceive how much the friends of America were run upon and hurt by them, and how much the Grenvillians triumphed. I have just written a paper for next Tuesday's *Chronicle* to extenuate matters a little.\*

Mentioning Colonel Onslow reminds me of something, that passed at the beginning of this session in the House

---

\* Scarcely had Franklin returned to London from his continental trip, when news arrived of the retaliatory measures which the series of revenue acts of Parliament had provoked in Boston. They were regarded as but the Stamp Act in a new disguise, and as a continuation of a policy which it was hoped had been abandoned with that odious measure. Disappointed and indignant, the Bostonians assembled in town meeting, formally recommended the encouragement of domestic manufactures and the abandonment of all superfluities, and engaged themselves, after a stated time, to eschew entirely the use of certain specified articles of foreign manufacture.

These resolutions, adopted on the 28th of October, 1767, produced scarcely less excitement in England than the acts of Parliament which provoked them had produced in the colonies. They were denounced as deliberately disrespectful to Parliament, and little short of rebellious. These threats from the colonies worried Franklin, because they strengthened the enemies of the actual ministry, which was doing the best it could for America. To calm the excitement, Dr. Franklin wrote a paper which was printed, though, as Dr. Franklin said, with the teeth drawn and the nails pared, that

between him and Mr. Grenville. The latter had been raving against America, as traitorous, rebellious, &c., when the former, who has always been its firm friend, stood up and gravely said, that in reading the Roman history he found it was a custom among that wise and magnanimous people, whenever the senate was informed of any discontent in the provinces, to send two or three of their body into the discontented provinces, to inquire into the grievances complained of, and report to the senate, that mild measures might be used to remedy what was amiss, before any severe steps were taken to enforce obedience; that this example he thought worthy of our imitation in the present state of our colonies, for he did so far agree with the honorable gentleman, that spoke just before him, as to allow there were great discontents among them. He should therefore beg leave to move, that two or three members of Parliament be appointed to go over to New England on this service. And that it might not be supposed he was for imposing burdens on others, which he would not be willing to bear himself, he did at the same time declare his own willingness, if the House should think fit to appoint them, to go over thither *with that honorable gentleman*. Upon this there was a great laugh, which continued some time, and was rather increased by Mr. Grenville's asking, "Will the gentleman engage, that I shall be safe there? Can I be assured

---

it could neither scratch nor bite, in the *London Chronicle*, entitled "Causes of the American Discontents before 1768." It did not save the ministry, however. The king was determined that the colonies should feel and respect his power, and so at the commencement of the following year Lord Hillsborough took the place of Lord Shelburne, and was made Secretary of State for America, a newly-created department, and was also placed at the head of the Board of Trade.—ED.

that I shall be allowed to come back again to make the report?" As soon as the laugh was so far subsided, as that Mr. Onslow could be heard again, he added, "I cannot absolutely engage for the honorable gentleman's safe return; but if he goes thither upon this service, I am strongly of opinion the *event* will contribute greatly to the future quiet of both countries." On which the laugh was renewed and redoubled.

If our people should follow the Boston example in entering into resolutions of frugality and industry, full as necessary for us as for them, I hope they will among other things give this reason, that it is to enable them more speedily and effectually to discharge their debts to Great Britain. This will soften a little, and at the same time appear honorable and like ourselves.

To John Ross,  
dated London, 13 Dec.,  
1767.

The instruction you mention, as proposed by a certain great man, was really a wild one. The reasons you made use of against it were clear and strong, and could not but prevail. It will be time enough to show a dislike to the coalition, when it is proposed to us. Meanwhile we have all the advantage in the argument of taxation, which our not being represented will continue to give us. I think, indeed, that such an event is very remote. This nation is indeed too proud to propose admitting American representatives into their Parliament; and America is not so humble, or so fond of the honor, as to petition for it. In matrimonial matches it is said, when one party is willing, the match is half made; but, where neither party is willing, there is no great danger of their coming together. And, to be sure, such an important business would never be treated of by agents unempowered

and uninstructed ; nor would government here act upon the private opinion of agents, which might be disowned by their constituents.

The present ministry seem now likely to continue through this session ; and this, as a new election approaches, gives them the advantage of getting so many of their friends chosen as may give a stability to their administration. I heartily wish it, because they are all well disposed towards America.

To William  
Franklin, da-  
ted London,  
19 December,  
1767.

DEAR SON,—We have had an ugly affair at the Royal Society lately. One Dacosta, a Jew, who as our clerk was intrusted with collecting our monies has been so unfaithful as to embezzle near £1300 in four years. Being one of the council this year as well as the last, I have been employed all the last week in attending the enquiry into and unravelling his accounts in order to come to a full knowledge of his frauds. His securities are bound in one thousand pounds to the Society, which they will pay, but we shall probably lose the rest. He had this year received twenty-six admission payments of twenty-five guineas each, which he did not bring to account.

While attending to this affair I had an opportunity of looking over the old council-books and journals of the Society, and having a curiosity to see how I came in, of which I had never been informed, I looked back for the minutes relating to it. You must know it is not usual to admit persons who have not requested to be admitted, and a recommendatory certificate in favor of the candidate, signed by at least three of the members, is by our rule to be presented to the Society, expressing that he is desirous of that honor, and is so and so qualified. As I never had

asked or expected the honor, I was, as I said before, curious to see how the business was managed. I found that the certificate, worded very advantageously for me, was signed by Lord Macclesfield then President, Lord Parker and Lord Willoughby; that the election was by a unanimous vote; and the honor being voluntarily conferred by the Society, unsolicited by me, it was thought wrong to demand or receive the usual fees or composition; so that my name was entered on the list with a vote of council *that I was not to pay any thing*, and accordingly nothing has ever been demanded of me. Those who are admitted in the common way, pay five guineas admission fees, and two guineas and a half yearly contribution, or twenty-five guineas down in lieu of it. In my case a substantial favor accompanied the honor.

To William  
Franklin, dated  
London, 9  
January, 1768.

We have had so many alarms of changes, which did not take place, that just when I wrote it was thought the ministry would stand their ground. However, immediately after, the talk was renewed, and it soon appeared that the Sunday changes were actually settled. Mr. Conway resigns and Lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Gower is made President of the Council in the room of Lord Northington. Lord Shelburne is stripped of the American business, which is given to Lord Hillsborough as secretary of state for America, a new distinct department. Lord Sandwich, it is said, comes into the postoffice in his place. Several of the Bedford party are now to come in.

How these changes may affect us, a little time will show. Little at present is thought of but elections, which gives me hopes that nothing will be done against America this

session, though the *Boston Gazette* had occasioned some heats, and the Boston Resolutions a prodigious clamor. I have endeavoured to palliate matters for them as well as I can. I send you my manuscript of one paper, though I think you take the *Chronicle*. The editor of that paper, one Jones, seems a Grenvillian, or is very cautious, as you will see by his corrections and omissions. He has drawn the teeth and pared the nails of my paper, so that it can neither scratch nor bite. It seems only to paw and mumble. I send you also two other late pieces of mine. There is another which I cannot find.

I am told there has been a talk of getting me appointed under-secretary to Lord Hillsborough; but with little likelihood, as it is a settled point here, that I am too much of an American. I am in very good health, thanks to God.

To Joseph Galloway, dated London, 9 January, 1768. I wrote to you by way of Boston, and have little to add, except to acquaint you that some changes have taken place since my last, which have not the most promising aspect for America, several of the Bedford party being come into employment again; a party that has distinguished itself by exclaiming against us on all late occasions. Mr. Conway, one of our friends, has resigned, and Lord Weymouth takes his place. Lord Shelburne, another friend, is stripped of the American part of the business of his office, which now makes a distinct department, in which Lord Hillsborough is placed. I do not think this nobleman in general an enemy to America; but, in the affair of paper money, he was last winter strongly against us.

I did hope I had removed some of his prejudices on that head, but am not certain. We have, however, increased

the cry for it here, and I believe shall attempt to obtain the repeal of the act, though the *Boston Gazette* and their resolutions about manufactures have hurt us much, having occasioned an immense clamor here. I have endeavoured to palliate matters for them as well as I can, and hope with some success. For having, in a large company in which were some members of Parliament, given satisfaction to all, by what I alleged in explanation of the conduct of the Americans, and to show that they were not quite so unreasonable as they appeared to be, I was advised by several present to make my sentiments public, not only for the sake of America, but as it would be some ease to our friends here, who are triumphed over a good deal by our adversaries on the occasion. I have accordingly done it in the enclosed paper.

To his wife,  
dated London,  
13 Feb.,  
1768.

I received your kind letter by Captain Story, of November 19th, and a subsequent one by Captain Falconer without date. I have received also the Indian and buckwheat meal, that they brought from you, with the apples, cranberries, and nuts, for all which I thank you. They all prove good, and the apples were particularly welcome to me and my friends, as there happens to be scarce any of any kind in England this year. We are much obliged to the captains, who are so good as to bring these things for us, without charging any thing for their trouble.

I am much concerned for my dear sister's loss of her daughter. It was kind in you to write a letter of condolence. I have also written to her on the occasion. I am not determined about bringing Sally over with me, but am obliged to you for the kind manner in which you speak of it,

and possibly I may conclude to do it.\* I am sorry you had so much trouble with that Nelson. By what is now said of her here, she did not deserve the notice you took of her, or that any credit should be given to her stories. I am afraid she has made mischief in my family by her falsehoods. I think your advice good, not to help any one to servants. I shall never be concerned in such business again; I never was lucky in it.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that a certain very great lady, the best woman in England, was graciously pleased to accept some of your nuts, and to say they were excellent. This is to yourself only.†

To Joseph Galloway, dated London, 17 Feb., 1768. In mine of January 9th, I wrote to you that I believed, notwithstanding the clamor against America had been greatly increased by the Boston proceedings, we should attempt this session to obtain the repeal of the restraining act relating to paper money. The change of the administration, with regard to American affairs, which was agreed on some time before the new secretary kissed hands and entered upon business, made it impossible to go forward with that affair, as the minister quitting that department would not, and his successor could not, engage in it; but now our friends the merchants have

---

\* This was Sally Franklin, the daughter of Thomas Franklin, a remote family connexion. As this Thomas Franklin was in narrow circumstances, Dr. Franklin took the charge of his daughter for several years. She married in England, and did not visit America.—ED.

† The following note explains this postscript:

"Dr. Franklin presents his respectful compliments to Lord Bathurst, with some American nuts; and to Lady Bathurst with some American apples; which he prays they will accept as a tribute from that country, small indeed, but *voluntary*."—ED.



been moving in it, and some of them have conceived hopes, from the manner in which Lord Hillsborough attended to their representations. It had been previously concluded among us, that, if the repeal was to be obtained at all, it must be proposed in the light of a favor to the merchants of this country, and asked for by them, not by the agents as a favor to America. But, as my Lord had, at sundry times before he came into his present station, discoursed with me on the subject, and got from me a copy of my answer to his report, when at the head of the Board of Trade, which some time since he thanked me for, and said he would read again and consider carefully, I waited upon him this morning, partly with intent to learn if he had changed his sentiments.

We entered into the subject, and had a long conversation upon it, in which all the arguments he used, against the legal tender of paper money, were intended to demonstrate, that it was for the benefit of the people themselves to have no such money current among them; and it was strongly his opinion, that, after the experience of being without it a few years, we should all be convinced of this truth, as he said the New England colonies now were; they having lately, on the rumor of an intended application for taking off the restraint, petitioned here, that it might be continued as to them. However, his Lordship was pleased to say, that, if such application was made for the three colonies of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, as I proposed, it should have fair play, he would himself give it no sort of opposition; but he was sure it would meet with a great deal, and he thought it could not succeed. He was pleased to make me compliments upon my paper, assuring me he had read it with a great deal of attention, that I had said

much more in favor of such a currency than he thought could be said, and all he believed that the subject would admit of; but that it had not on the whole changed his opinion, any further than to induce him to leave the matter now to the judgment of others, and let it take its course, without opposing it as last year he had determined to have done.

I go into the city to-morrow, to confer with the merchants again upon it; that, if they see any hopes, we may at least try the event. But I own my expectations are now very slender, knowing as I do, that nothing is to be done in Parliament, that is not a measure adopted by ministry and supported by their strength, much less any thing they are averse to *or indifferent about*.

I took the opportunity of discoursing with his Lordship concerning our particular affair of the change of government, gave him a detail of all proceedings hitherto, the delays it had met with, and its present situation. He was pleased to say, he would inquire into the matter, and would talk with me further upon it. He expressed great satisfaction in the good disposition, that, he said, appeared now to be general in America, with regard to government here, according to the latest advices; and informed me, that he had by his Majesty's order wrote the most healing letters to the several governors, which, if shown to the Assemblies, as he supposed they would be, could not but confirm that good disposition. As to the permission we want to bring wine, fruit, and oil directly from Spain and Portugal, and to carry iron direct to foreign markets, it is agreed on all hands that this is an unfavorable time to move in those matters; George Grenville and those in the opposition, on every hint of the kind, making a great noise about the Act

of Navigation, that palladium of England, as they call it, to be given up to rebellious America, &c. &c., so that the ministry would not venture to propose it, if *they* approved. I am to wait on the secretary again next Wednesday, and shall write you further what passes, that is material.

The Parliament have of late been acting an egregious farce, calling before them the mayor and aldermen of Oxford, for proposing a sum to be paid by their old members on being rechosen at the next election ; and sundry printers and brokers, for advertising and dealing in boroughs, &c. The Oxford people were sent to Newgate, and discharged, after some days, on humble petition, and receiving the Speaker's reprimand upon their knees. The House could scarcely keep countenances, knowing as they all do, that the practice is general. People say, they mean nothing more than to *beat down the price* by a little discouragement of borough jobbing, now that their own elections are all coming on. The price indeed is grown exorbitant, no less than *four thousand pounds* for a member.

Mr. Beckford has brought in a bill for preventing bribery and corruption in elections, wherein was a clause to oblige every member to swear, on his admission into the House, that he had not directly or indirectly given any bribe to any elector ; but this was so universally exclaimed against, as answering no end but perjuring the members, that he has been obliged to withdraw that clause. It was indeed a cruel contrivance of his, worse than the gunpowder plot ; for that was only to blow the Parliament up to heaven, this to sink them all down to —. Mr. Thurlow opposed his bill by a long speech. Beckford, in reply, gave a dry hit to the House, that is repeated everywhere. “The honorable gentleman,” says he, “in his learned discourse, gave

us first one definition of corruption, then he gave us another definition of corruption, and I think he was about to give us a third. Pray does that gentleman imagine *there is any member of this House that does not* KNOW what corruption is?" which occasioned only a roar of laughter, for they are so hardened in the practice, that they are very little ashamed of it. This between ourselves.

To Thomas  
Wharton, dated  
London,  
20 Feb., 1768.

The story you mention of Secretary Conway's wondering what I could be doing in England, and that he had not seen me for a considerable time, savours strongly of the channel through which it came, and deserves no notice. But, since his name is mentioned, it gives me occasion to relate what passed between us the last time I had the honor of conversing with him. It was at court, when the late changes were first rumored, and it was reported he was to resign the secretary's office. Talking of America, I said I was sorry to find, that our friends were one after another quitting the administration, that I was apprehensive of the consequences, and hoped what I heard of his going out was not true. He said it was really true, the employment had not been of his choice, he had never any taste for it, but had submitted to engage in it for a time, at the instance of his friends, and he believed his removal could not be attended with any ill consequences to America; that he was a sincere wellwisher to the prosperity of that country as well as this, and hoped the imprudences of either side would never be carried to such a height, as to create a breach of the union, so essentially necessary to the welfare of both; that, as long as his Majesty continued to honor him with a share in his counsels, America should always find in him a friend, &c. This

I write, as it was agreeable to me to hear, and I suppose will be so to you to read. For his character has more in it of the frank honesty of the soldier, than of the plausible insincerity of the courtier; and therefore what he says is more to be depended on.

The Proprietor's dislike to my continuing in England, to be sure, is very natural; as well as to the repeated choice of Assembly men, not his friends; and probably he would, as they so little answer his purposes, wish to see elections as well as agencies abolished. They make him very unhappy, but it cannot be helped.

To Mr. Livezey, dated London, 20 Feb., 1768. I received your kind letter of November 18th, with a very welcome present of another dozen of your wine. The former had been found excellent by many good judges; my wine merchant in particular was very desirous of knowing what quantity of it might be had, and at what price, to which I could give him no satisfaction. I only said, that the grapes, being uncultivated, were not very juicy; I apprehended, so many of them must be required, and so much labor in gathering and pressing them, to produce a little wine, that the price could not be very low. I shall apply this parcel as I did the last, towards warming the hearts of the friends of our country, and wellwishers to the change of its government.

To Cadwallader Evans, dated London, 20 Feb., 1768. I wrote you a few lines by Capt. Falconer and sent you Dr. Watson's new piece of Experiments in inoculation, which I hope will be agreeable to you.

In yours of Nov. 20th you mention the lead in the worms of stills as a probable cause of the dry bellyache among

punch drinkers in our West Indies. I had before acquainted Dr. Baker with a fact of that kind, the general mischief done by the use of lead worms, when rum-distilling was first practised in New England, which occasioned a severe law there against them; and he has mentioned it in the 2d part of the piece not yet published. I have long been of opinion, that this distemper proceeds always from a metallic cause only, observing that it affects, among tradesmen those that use lead, however different their trades, as glaciers, letter founders, plumbers, potters, white lead makers, and painters; (from the latter, it has been conjectured, it took its name *Colica Pictonum*, by the mistake of a letter and not from its being the disease of Picton;) and although the worms of stills ought to be of pure tin, they are often made of pewter, which has a mixture in it of lead.

The Boston people pretending to interfere with the manufactures of this country, makes a great clamor here against America in general. I have endeavored therefore to palliate matters a little in several public papers. It would as you justly observe give less umbrage if we meddled only with such manufactures as England does not attend to. That of linen might be carried on more or less in every family, (perhaps it can only do in a family way,) and silk I think in most of the colonies. But there are many manufactures that we cannot carry on to advantage, though we were at entire liberty. And after all this country is fond of manufactures beyond their real value; for the true source of riches is husbandry. Agriculture is truly *productive of new wealth*; manufactures only change forms; and whatever value they give to the material they work upon, they in the mean time consume an equal value of provisions, &c. So that riches are not *increased* by manufacturing; the only

advantage is that provisions in the shape of manufactures are more easily carried for sale in foreign markets. And where the provisions cannot be easily carried to market, it is well so to transform them for our own use as well as for foreign sale. In families also where the children and servants of farmers have some spare time, it is well to employ it in making something ; and in spinning or knitting, &c., to gather up fragments (of time) that nothing may be lost ; for these fragments, though small in themselves, amount to something great in the year and the family must eat whether they work or are idle.

But this nation seems to have increased the number of its manufactures beyond reasonable bounds (for there are bounds to every thing) whereby provisions are now risen to an exorbitant price by the demand for supplying home mouths ; so that there may be an importation from foreign countries ; but the expense of bringing provisions from abroad to feed manufacturers here will so enhance the price of the manufactures that they may be made cheaper where the provisions grow and the mouths will go to the meat.\*

To William  
Franklin, da-  
ted London,  
13 March,  
1768.

The purpose of settling the new colonies seems at present to be dropped, the change of American administration not appearing favorable to it. There seems rather to be an inclination to abandon the posts in the back country, as more expensive than useful ; but counsels are so continually fluctuating here, that nothing can be depended on. The

\* In the decade in which England drove her American Colonies to rebellion she first began to experience the necessity of importing grain. Her needs have increased with her population, until now she imports more than half her breadstuffs, and is more dependent upon America than upon all other countries in the world together for the food she consumes. British mouths, too, for the last quarter of a century have been going in constantly increasing proportions to the meat.—ED.

new secretary, my Lord Hillsborough, is, I find, of opinion, that the troops should be placed, the chief part of them, in Canada and Florida, only three battalions to be quartered in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania; and that Forts Pitt, Oswego, Niagara, &c., should be left to the colonies to garrison and keep up, if they think it necessary, for the protection of their trade. Probably his opinion may be followed, if the new changes do not produce other ideas.

As to my own sentiments, I am weary of suggesting them to so many different inattentive heads, though I must continue to do it while I stay among them. The letters from Sir William Johnson, relating to the boundary, were at last found, and orders were sent over about Christmas for completing the purchase and settlement of it. My Lord Hillsborough has promised me to send duplicates by this packet, and urge the speedy execution, as we represented to him the danger, that these dissatisfactions of the Indians might produce a war. But I can tell you, there are many here, to whom the news of such a war would give pleasure; who speak of it as a thing to be wished; partly as a chastisement to the colonies, and partly to make them feel the want of protection from this country, and pray for it. For it is imagined, that we could not possibly defend ourselves against the Indians without such assistance; so little is the state of America understood here.

My Lord Hillsborough mentioned the "Farmer's Letters" to me, said he had read them, that they were well written, and he believed he could guess who was the author, looking in my face at the same time, as if he thought it was me. He censured the doctrines as extremely wild. I have read them as far as No. 8. I know not if any more have been published. I should have thought they



had been written by Mr. Delancey, not having heard any mention of the others you point out as joint authors.\* I am not yet master of the idea these and the New England writers have of the relation between Britain and her colonies. I know not what the Boston people mean by the "subordination" they acknowledge in their Assembly to Parliament, while they deny its power to make laws for them, nor what bounds the Farmer sets to the power he acknowledges in Parliament to "regulate the trade of the colonies," it being difficult to draw lines between duties for regulation and those for revenue; and, if the Parliament is to be the judge, it seems to me that establishing such principles of distinction will amount to little.

The more I have thought and read on the subject, the more I find myself confirmed in opinion, that no middle doctrine can be well maintained, I mean not clearly with intelligible arguments. Something might be made of either of the extremes; that Parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or that it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty, than those for the former. Supposing that doctrine established, the colonies would then be so many separate states, only subject to the same king, as England and Scotland were before the union. And then the question would be, whether a union like that with Scotland would or would not be advantageous to *the whole*. I should have no doubt of the affirmative, being fully persuaded that it would be best for *the whole*, and that though particular parts might

---

\* The "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania" were written by John Dickinson, and published the following year in England, with a preface by Dr. Franklin.—ED.

find particular disadvantages in it, they would find greater advantages in the security arising to every part from the increased strength of the whole. But such union is not likely to take place, while the nature of our present relation is so little understood on both sides of the water, and sentiments concerning it remain so widely different.

As to the Farmer's combating, as you say they intend to do, my opinion, that the Parliament might lay duties though not impose internal taxes, I shall not give myself the trouble to defend it. Only to you, I may say, that not only the Parliament of Britain, but every state in Europe, claims and exercises a right of laying duties on the exportation of its own commodities to foreign countries. A duty is paid here on coals exported to Holland, and yet England has no right to lay an internal tax on Holland. All goods brought out of France to England, or any other country, are charged with a small duty in France, which the consumers pay, and yet France has no right to tax other countries. And in my opinion the grievance is not that Britain puts duties upon her own manufactures exported to us, but that she forbids us to buy the like manufactures from any other country. This she does, however, in virtue of her allowed right to regulate the commerce of the whole empire, allowed I mean by the Farmer, though I think whoever would dispute that right might stand upon firmer ground, and make much more of the argument; but my reasons are too many and too long for a letter.

Mr. Grenville complained in the House, that the governors of New Jersey, New Hampshire, East and West Florida, had none of them obeyed the orders sent them, to give an account of the manufactures carried on in their respective provinces. Upon hearing this, I went after the

House was up, and got a sight of the reports made by the other governors. They are all much in the same strain, that there are no manufactures of any consequence; in Massachusetts a little coarse woollen only, made in families for their own wear; glass and linen have been tried and failed. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York much the same. Pennsylvania has tried a linen manufactory, but it is dropped, it being imported cheaper; there is a glasshouse in Lancaster county, but it makes only a little coarse ware for the country neighbours. Maryland is clothed all with English manufactures. Virginia the same, except that in their families they spin a little cotton of their own growing. South Carolina and Georgia none. All speak of the dear-ness of labor, that makes manufactures impracticable. Only the governor of North Carolina parades with a large manufacture in his country, that may be useful to Britain, of *pine boards*; they having fifty sawmills on one river.

These accounts are very satisfactory here, and induce the Parliament to despise and take no notice of the Boston resolutions. I wish you would send your account before the meeting of next Parliament. You have only to report a glasshouse for coarse window glass and bottles, and some domestic manufactures of linen and woollen for family use, that do not half clothe the inhabitants, all the finer goods coming from England and the like. I believe you will be puzzled to find any other, though I see great puffs in the papers.

The Parliament is up, and the nation in a ferment with the new elections. Great complaints are made that the natural interests of country gentlemen in their neighbouring boroughs is overborne by the moneyed interests of the new people, who have got sudden fortunes in the Indies, or

as contractors. *Four thousand pounds* is now the *market price* for a borough. In short, this whole venal nation is now at market, will be sold for about two millions, and might be bought out of the hands of the present bidders (if he would offer half a million more) by the very Devil himself.

I shall wait on Lord Hillsborough again next Wednesday, on behalf of the sufferers by Indian and French depredations, to have an allowance of lands out of any new grant made by the Indians, so long solicited, and perhaps still to be solicited, in vain.

## APPENDIX.



APPENDIX No. I. See p. 54

*Preface to Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin, by Wm. Temple Franklin. Edition of 1817.*

“AN apology for presenting to the republic of letters the authentic memorials of Benjamin Franklin, illustrative of his life and times, written almost entirely with his own hands, would be at once superfluous and disrespectful. If any observation be at all requisite in the shape of explanations, it must be in answer to the inquiry, why such interesting documents have been so long withheld from public view? To this the editor has no hesitation in replying, that were he conscious of having neglected a solemn trust, by disobeying a positive injunction; or could he be convinced that the world has sustained any real injury by the delay of the publication, he certainly should take shame to himself for not having sooner committed to the press what at an earlier period would have been much more to his pecuniary advantage; but aware as he is, of the deference due to the general feeling of admiration for the illustrious dead, he is not less sensible that there are *times* and *seasons* when prudence imposes the restriction of silence in the gratification even of the most laudable curiosity. It was the lot of this distinguished character, above most men, to move, in the prominent parts of his active life, within a sphere agitated to no ordinary degree of heat by the inflammatory passions of political fury; and he had scarcely seated himself in the shade of repose from the turmoil of public employment, when another revolution burst forth with

far more tremendous violence, during the progress of which his name was adduced by anarchists as a sanction for their practices, and his authority quoted by dreamy theorists in support of their visionary projects.

“ Whether, therefore, the publication of his *Memoirs* and other papers, amidst such a scene of perturbation, would have been conducive to the desirable ends of peace, may be a matter of question ; but, at all events, the sober and inquisitive part of mankind can have no cause to regret the suspension of what might have suffered from the perverted talents of designing partisans and infuriated zealots. It may fairly be observed, that the writings of Dr. Franklin are calculated to serve a far more important purpose than that of ministering to the views of party and keeping alive national divisions, which, however necessitated by circumstances, ought to cease with the occasion, and yield to the spirit of philanthropy. Even amidst the din of war and the contention of faction, it was the constant aim of this excellent man to promote a conciliatory disposition, and to correct the acerbity of controversy. Though no one could feel more sensibly for the wrongs of his country, or have more enlarged ideas on the subject of general liberty, his powerful efforts to redress the one and extend the other, were always connected with the paramount object of social improvement, in the recommendation of those habits which tend more effectually to unite men together in the bonds of amity. Happening, however, to live himself in a turbulent period, and called upon to take a leading part in those scenes which produced a new empire in the Western World, much of his latter *Memoirs* and correspondence will be to exhibit his undisguised thoughts upon the public men and occurrences of the day. These sketches, anecdotes, and reflections will now be read by men of opposite sentiments, without awakening painful recollections or rekindling the dying embers of animosity, while the historian and the moralist may learn from them the secret springs of public events, and the folly of being carried away by political prejudice.



"While, therefore, some contracted minds in different countries may be querulously disposed to censure the delay that has taken place in the publication of these posthumous papers, it is presumed that the more considerate and liberal on either side of the Atlantic will approve of the motives which have operated for the procrastination, even though the period has so far exceeded the *nonum annum* assigned by Horace, the oldest and best of critics, for the appearance of a finished performance.

"The editor, in offering this justificatory plea to the public, and taking credit for having exercised so much discretion as to keep these relics in his private custody till the return of halcyon days and a brightened horizon, when their true value might be best appreciated, feels that he has discharged his duty in that manner which the venerable writer himself would have prescribed, could he have anticipated the disorders which have ravaged the most polished and enlightened states since his removal from this scene of pride and weakness, where nations as well as individuals have their periods of infancy and decrepitude, of moral vigor and wild derangement.

"Shortly after the death of Dr. Franklin, there were not wanting the usual train of *literary speculators* to exercise their industry in collecting his avowed productions, together with those which public rumor ascribed to his pen. These miscellanies were printed in various forms, both in England and America, greatly to the advantage of the publishers; nor did the possessor of the originals avail himself of the general avidity and the celebrity of his ancestor, to deprive those persons of the profits which they continued to reap from repeated editions of papers that have cost them nothing. When, however, they had reason to apprehend that the genuine Memoirs and other works of Franklin, as written and corrected by himself, would be brought forward in a manner suitable to their importance and the dignified rank of the author in the political and literary world, invidious reports were sent abroad, and circulated with uncommon diligence; asserting that all the literary remains of Dr. Franklin

had been purchased at an enormous rate by the British ministry, who (*mirabile dictu*) it seems were more afraid of this arsenal of paper than of the power of France, with all her numerous resources and auxiliaries. This convenient tale, absurd as it was, found reporters both in Europe and in the United States, who bruited it about with so much art as to make many who were unacquainted with the legatee of the manuscripts, believe it to be true, and to lament feelingly, that such inestimable productions should be suppressed, and lost for ever, through the cupidity of the person to whom they were bequeathed. Provoking as the story was, the party whom it most affected, and whose interests it was designed to injure, felt too much of the *conscia mens recti* to do otherwise than treat the ridiculous invention with contempt, from a persuasion that the refutation of an improbable falsehood is beneath the dignity of truth. He, therefore, endured the opprobrium without complaint, and even suffered it to be repeated without being goaded into an explanation; contented to wait for the time when he might best fulfill his duty and shame his calumniators. That period has at length arrived, and the world will now see whether an enlightened government could be weak enough to be frightened by the posthumous works of a philosopher; or whether a man of integrity, bred under Franklin, bearing his name, and entrusted with his confidence, could be bribed into an act of treachery to his memory.

“Of the present collection it remains to be observed, that the only portion which has hitherto appeared in any form, is the first fasciculus of the Memoirs of Dr. Franklin, extending from his birth to the year 1757, forming one hundred and seventy-five pages only of the present volume. But even what has formerly been printed of this part, can scarcely lay claim to *originality*, since the English edition is no more than a translation from the French, which of itself is a professed version of a transcription; so that the metamorphoses of this interesting piece of biography may be said to resemble the fate of Milton's epic poem, which a French Abbé paraphrased into inflated prose, and which an

English writer, ignorant of its origin, turned back again under the double disguise into its native tongue.

"Admitting, however, that the small portion of the Memoir given to the world, is substantially correct in the materials of the narrative, the present publication of it *must be infinitely more estimable by being printed literally from the original autograph.*

"It is much to be regretted, that Dr. Franklin was not enabled, by his numerous avocations and the infirmities of old age, to complete the narrative of his life in his own inimitable manner. That he intended to have done this is certain, from his correspondence, as well as from the parts in continuation of the Memoir which are now for the first time communicated to the world. But the convulsed state of things during the American Revolution, the lively concern which he had in that event, and his multiplied public engagements, after contributing to the establishment of the independence of his country, prevented him from indulging his own inclinations, and complying with the earnest desire of his numerous friends."

---

## APPENDIX No. II. See p. 60.

*Preface to "Correspondance Inédite, etc., de B. Franklin."*  
*By M. Charles Malo.*

[Translation.]

"IN publishing in France a complete Correspondence of Dr. Franklin, I have intended to afford the public an opportunity of enjoying the only part of the works of this celebrated man which has remained unknown to us up to this time. This Correspondence has the inappreciable advantage of being neither altered nor abridged. France, England, America, there play a part so important that I should reproach myself if I had sup-

pressed the smallest passage of it. Franklin will be found there in this Correspondence complete and characteristic, with all that freedom of speech so piquant and so noble which he indulged toward all the courts of Europe.

"Two or three journals have announced a *Select Correspondence* of Franklin. It is my duty to enlighten the public on this fraudulent speculation of M. Temple (Franklin). Desirous of prejudicing the interests of French booksellers, and at the same time desperate at having been so unfortunately anticipated by the appearance of a *Complete Correspondence*, this gentleman had no other resource but to make a *Selected Correspondence*; but he has not foreseen that in reducing to one-half the work which I publish to-day in two octavo volumes, he would really give only an abridgment of it, an extract; that his boasted *Selection* will be but an insignificant piece of claptrap, a thing of shreds and patches. When, in fact, will the formidable scissors stop of a foreigner who is directed by considerations of self-love, and animated by local passions? In purchasing 'the Abridged Correspondence' of M. Temple (Franklin), one will still not have Franklin. But let us be just. If M. Temple (Franklin) cuts up and piteously lacerates a Correspondence as yet entirely unpublished, and which was absolutely unknown in France, in revenge, and by an equally reasonable calculation, he is about to reproduce for the fourth time, that is to say to satiety, the 'Memoirs of the Life of Franklin,' printed at Paris, for the first time, in 1791 (one volume in 8vo., by Buisson); for the second time, in the year II. (one volume in 12mo., Rue Therese); and for the third time, in 1800 (two volumes in 8vo., by Buisson), from the English edition of Dundee.

"I owe this confidence to my readers, especially to that public which M. Temple (Franklin) appeals to, that it may be duly instructed as to the merit of the editions of which this person wishes to give France the benefit.

"Since the month of January, and by many French booksellers, with a competition much more formidable than the

'*Extracts of Correspondence*,' which M. Temple (Franklin) announces to-day, and to satisfy also the impatient subscribers of this *Complete Correspondence*, the literary gentleman charged with it has judged proper to confide to two literary men, equally known and esteemed, MM. Cohen and Breton, the translation of a certain number of sheets of the second volume.

"The style of Franklin became, as he advanced in years, less clear and less vigorous; that of his correspondents also was frequently diffuse and confused. In imposing upon himself the rule never to depart from the original in any respect, the translator has necessarily encountered numberless difficulties, and has seen himself forced to reproduce thousands of abstract ideas. By the aid of a convenient *selection* he might easily have been able to avoid the one, and substitute his own ideas for the others; but the glory of belittling a great man, of *abridging* Franklin, was reserved for one of his descendants. Ought we to inherit from one we have assassinated?"

END OF VOL. I.











**This book is under no circumstances to be  
taken from the Building**

[illegible]